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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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The Rollo Books

WHO is old enough now to have been young when the Rollo books were still administered like castor oil and rock candy to gaping youth? They were propaganda then—rows of little red and brown volumes that edged off imperceptibly from Rollo into Jonas and Lucy—snobbish little books morally, where idle youngsters in the background were always leaving undone what they ought to have done, while Rollo, or Jonas, in the foreground, was asking questions of his priggish uncle or his tight-mouthed father (Jehovah in New England) whose answers justified the ways of God to man, and beat Milton by explaining the ways in the same chapter. That drive into Boston, where the sights of the Athens of the East majestically ranged themselves on either side of the travellers in their buggy (was it a buggy?), and the poor Irish on the pavements were sermons on thriftlessness; the trip on the Erie Canal with the first principles of hydraulics adroitly inserted into a description of tow-path scenery, with side remarks on being helpful, and a moral about growing up with the country; Jonas and his little sister (was it Jonas?) with how not to bring up children illustrated by the way he tried to manage her; Rollo at work, at play, abroad, in trouble; Rollo spendthrift and Rollo thrifty; Rollo learning that generosity pauperizes the lazy; Rollo being trimmed and twisted into the pattern of an American, industrious, level-headed, self-controlled, energetic—and also dry, pharisaical, narrow, a moral snob, and a believer in work for work's sake.

The Russian films, the Russian primers, arouse a nostalgia for those little red and gray books which were old-fashioned even in the youth of the middle-aged, but still authoritative, still impregnable in their reasoning. The Russians, too, are teaching manifest destiny for good little boys and girls. With them the morals are just as heavily stressed, and the stories even more naive. There is a difference of course. Their morality is no longer protestant and individualist. Success does not depend with them upon working for one's self while respecting the rights of the neighbors and remembering that God helps those who help themselves. Success for them is not being better off than other men. The wisp of hay they wave before their donkeys' heads is the assurance that all men will share the profits of a united industry. The rainbow above is an exaltation of a common lot and common purpose. But work is glorified in both moralities. The New Englander excelled in a subtle appeal to the moral snobbery which resists the wiles of pleasure in order to exult in spiritual superiority. The Russians somewhat dangerously assume that since leisure is slacking, the less said about pleasure the better. They disregard any necessities in life not summed up in shelter, food, clothes, respect for one's neighbors, and the satisfaction of elemental emotions. The Rollo books add a sense of personal dignity, but leave out the emotions.

Continents to conquer seem to have much the same effect in Europe as in America. Russia is in our pioneer age. The gospel of individualism versus the gospel of collectivism; three acres and a mule, a quarter section and a mowing machine, Pike's Peak or Bust versus the triumph of the proletariat, training to serve the state, the glory of labor. The more things

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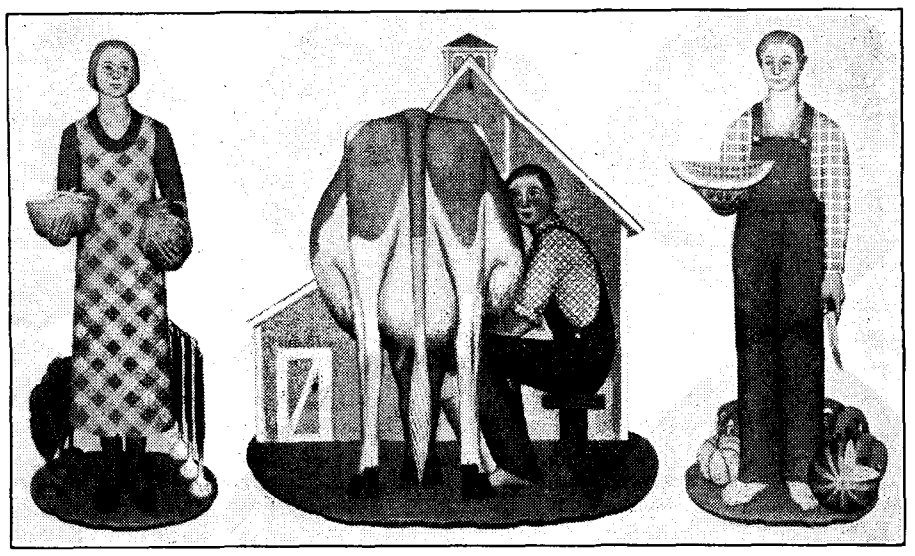

MURAL IN CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, PAINTED BY GRANT WOOD.

An Ordered Harvest*

By RUSSELL LORD

E. B. WHITE, who composes week by week *The New Yorker's* opening editorial *causerie,* is never more worth heeding than when, with a poet's assumed humility, he confronts economists and goes in small, straight words to the heart of the world's bewilderment. Reviewing dispatches from at home and abroad under date of January 28, last, "The Soviet," he noted, "banished into Siberia the people of three towns, to punish them for not producing enough grain. The United States, on the other hand, was working out a plan to pay her farmers a bonus if they would agree to produce *less* grain. A philosopher, hearing of this, fell ill of a fever and died."

The deceased must have been an unreconstructed free-trader. Too few of his sort remain. Irrationally, but actually, we live now in a neighborhood of nations walled up abruptly one against the other, despising one another, suspicious of one another, tensely intent upon manœuvers of self-substinence, and horribly afraid. Most of the great powers beyond the water are well along on programs that drive, coax, and pay their farmers to grow more food at home. France, Germany, Italy, and England guarantee for home-grown wheat anywhere from three to four times the American price current. The wheat program of European countries, as a whole, calls for an increased production of 150 million bushels a year. That is nearly as much wheat as we used to export to them.

Mad as it all may seem, then, the spectacle of Moscow banishing laggard husbandmen, of Mussolini whooping on the peasantry to a "battle of the grain," of Britain imposing a tax on bread to buy from her farmers a greater sowing, bears a direct, realistic, cause-and-effect relationship to the American domestic allotment plan. Mr. White had outlined the proposal fairly and clearly: "Pay farmers a bonus if they agree to produce less." M. L. Wilson of the Montana State Agricultural College, who placed before Congress last summer the six-point allotment program which Mr. Roosevelt later accepted, is scarcely less direct. "The plan," said Professor Wilson last month before a microphone in Chicago, "can be very simply stated: Put a tax on certain foodstuffs that we are producing in surplus for export; and pay that money only to farmers who sign a Government allotment contract to hold their production where it is, or to reduce it if need be."

Such a program sharply reverses our traditional economic *mores.* That is necessary. So far at least as agricultural expansion is concerned, America became late in 1918 a land of limited opportunity. The initial gyrations can be no more than suggested in an article of this length, but the main facts appear to be these: On December 31, 1918, England, France, and Italy repudiated contractual orders for 396,800,000 pounds of American pork products; and England raced boats to Australia and the Argentine for cheaper supplies. On the same day, with an Armistice newly signed and Woodrow Wilson's picture propped, in all reverence, beside the image of the Virgin in many a home of France, the Allied Blockade Council, led by France, violated an express promise of the Armistice and refused to permit the entrance of American and other foodstuffs into starving Germany.

"With Europe's after-war markets abruptly closed to us," wrote George Barr Baker, in *The Saturday Evening Post* during Mr. Hoover's run for the presidency in 1928,

> the secret was kept. With American food cargoes repudiated, blocked, allowed to pile up unused in warehouses, on wharves, at European ports, the secret still was kept; that interminable procession of food shipments was kept moving to Europe. . . . Hoover, thwarted from all sides by the hatred engendered by the war, wearied almost beyond human endurance, fought on . . . and marketed our entire Armistice surplus at wartime prices. . . ."

That last clause of Mr. Baker's may, in friendship, surge a bit beyond the fact; but there can be little doubt that, with personal pride involved, and with humanitarianism, his fiercest passion, aroused, Herbert Hoover labored mightily to clear our Armistice surplus at guaranteed Food Administration prices and to get food to defeated peoples who bitterly needed it. Later, serving his Republican apprenticeship as Secretary of Commerce under Presidents Harding and Coolidge, Mr. Hoover continued to interest himself in the spectacle of an agriculture blocked

(*Continued on next page*)

*VOLUNTARY ALLOTMENT, Planned Production in American Agriculture. By Edward S. Mead and Bernhard Ostrolenk. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press. 1933.

Ourselves

WHAT IS AMERICAN? By FRANK ERNEST HILL. New York: The John Day Company. 1933. $2.

Reviewed by CONSTANCE ROURKE

AMERICANS have always been absorbed in the question of what constitutes the national character. Where many others have been absorbed in single traits or phases of it Mr. Hill has sought for synthesis. He has chosen certain dynamic forces — the land, racial influences, the Puritan inheritance, the machine — and has united them in broad discussion to create broad outlines. "What Is American?" belongs to the romantic literature about America, but its romanticism has form and flavor, and if no final answer is reached, Mr. Hill has that rare thing, an ardor of approach which creates a sense of lively interchange with the reader. At times he stimulates round argument, but so much better for the capacious subject.

A very beautiful and dramatic sense of the land emerges from the book; and the stress upon the extremes and variability of our climate, our clear light, and great distances is interestingly applied. It is a primal land which Mr. Hill so stirringly portrays, not the actual America, cut and ravaged and blackened over many great tracts by a hasty industrialism. Nothing intimate or homely, nothing of that rooted, possessive sense of the land which exists widely in the older countries is suggested; this has never been wholly possible with us because of our incessant movement, yet here and there it exists. Mr. Hill has chosen the wide sweep, the less realistic approach. This primal land may not wholly reflect our character, but it is something to catch the glow of the possibility.

In another connection Mr. Hill discusses the land with an idealistic view, as creating the force of democracy. "All men had land," he says of the pioneering era. "One man's stake in the new country was as good as another's." But in early New England this equality in the division of land was an "equalitie according to

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THE LETTERS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.
Reviewed by E. PRESTON DARGAN.

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men's estates" and caused a considerable discontent. Undoubtedly a sense of equality grew up in spite of this discontent, but because of such conflict this would seem to be a far more complex affair than Mr. Hill indicates, with many cross currents of doubt and remembrances of failure. The somewhat inflated sense of equality often observable among us may even be a valiant effort to offset these.

As to our racial strains, Mr. Hill has excellent things to say—excellent because they are acceptant and unforced. He neither exalts nor deplores our mixed heritage, and his statement of the contribution of the Negro is both warm and direct. He includes the Indian as a major influence. Here the romantic poet speaks rather than the realist or the student. Mr. Hill says: "From the first the Americans responded instinctively to elements in the Indian; ceremonious dignity, faith in friendship, intimacy with nature, scorn of pain, passionate sacrificial bravery." But both Massachusetts and Connecticut offered bounties for Indian scalps in 1703, and while many Americans have learned the nobler passages of Indian oratory, the history of our relationship with the Indians is almost without exception a history of misunderstanding and bad faith. Mr. Hill is undoubtedly right in discussing the Indian as a major influence in the making of the American character, but this influence has had its dark phases, and the poetry of the relationship—which has truly existed at times in spite of the bad faith—would seem to be of a more primitive order than he suggests.

In the main the American character is somewhat oversimplified in this book, and in spite of the spell of its writing, queries will continually arise for those who like complexity and who feel that dark phases must not be overlooked if we are to have —well, such a primal land as Mr. Hill evokes. He is not, however, entirely on the romantic side. He says of the European social system that "on the whole it has produced individuals more dependably effective for the work they do and the social life they lead than any agency in

MURAL IN CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, PAINTED BY GRANT WOOD.

emphasizes the fact that we have had "a free-for-all struggle between many different religious impulses. The complicated and disordered nature of this spiritual America must be kept in mind if we are to understand Americans of today." This is an idea of first importance, and there are many such germinal statements in the book.

Perhaps it is a renunciation of the fantastic which has stripped away some of the complexity from Mr. Hill's portraiture. "America is rich in the fantastic," he says, "and this has its place in our sense of American quality, yet in seeking the core of this quality we must set the fantastic aside." Why? The fantastic seems to some of us ingrained in the American character. Still rather an unfinished affair, it appears as full of cutbacks, biases, contradictions—what used to be called on the older stage "conceits." There are our lively language, native humor, folk tales, folk art (now coming to the surface), and folk music. The existence of some of these Mr. Hill denies. He denies even the trace of folk music in New England in spite of the rich song material remaining to us from Maine, Vermont, and from that other New England which was the sea.

But we must not be beguiled into writing further marginalia on this interesting book. Most readers will be led into that stimulating pastime, in agreement or disagreement, with great profit.

Constance Rourke is the author of "American Humor—A Study of the National Character."

An Ordered Harvest

(*Continued from preceding page*)

in its former outlets and choked by surpluses.

America, except for some thirty million farmers and a few other producers of essential raw materials, had entered magically upon the nine fat years. In contrast thereto, as an extreme instance, half of Montana's wheat farmers had by 1923 been forced out of business. Henry C. Wallace, then Secretary of Agriculture, came out for having the Government buy up the surplus and dump it at the world price abroad. The loss, it was argued, would be many times retrieved in a raised domestic price, and could be carried in the interim by an "equalization fee," or tax. In other words, Secretary Wallace declared for the McNary-Haugen Plan. Secretary Hoover opposed it. "Organization must be created among farmers outside of the government. The government should offer such assistance as it can to such organization, but not administer or regulate it," he said.

The Farm Board was a'borning. Mr. Hoover was going to have another chance to clear, in his own way, the bursting barns of a stricken agriculture, his adopted child.

I do not say that unsympathetically or disrespectfully. As president, Mr. Hoover accomplished a great deal of hard and thankless groundwork in the cause of an organized and ordered agriculture. He removed emphasis from the customary preachments to farmers about their bounden duty to grow more food and cut

might have worked. As it was, he was driven onward to expedients more and more questionable. His distinctions became extremely delicate and confused. Manfully swallowing camels, he strained at gnats. His Farm Board begged the farmers of Kansas to grow less wheat, loaned money to grape-growers with the understanding that they would return to earth unharvested a certain part of the crop, and proposed that every third row of cotton be plowed down. At the end, the Board reported sadly: "To be of any lasting help, any plan must provide a system of effective regulation."

One of Mr. Hoover's last official acts was to gulp down the biggest camel of all, and send to Congress a qualified plea for the Republican counter-manœuver against allotments—the Hyde proposal that the Government go forth with a bag of money and lease surplus-bearing lands out of production. A few days after that, Mr. Roosevelt appointed "Young" Henry Wallace, the son of Mr. Hoover's old antagonist, as the new Secretary of Agriculture.

The new Secretary helped draw up the six-point Wilson allotment program which Mr. Roosevelt declared for at Topeka. He sees in the allotment plan an "orderly retreat" toward harvests sufficient for our own need, plus only such amounts as can be sold to the world with profit. The more closely you examine this proposal, the more clearly it becomes no random device of political opposition, but simply the next step necessary in programs that Herbert Hoover served powerfully to set going as Food Administrator fifteen years ago, and kept a fairly close hand on until this month.

Mr. Hoover was forever inviting industries to confer and coöperate; but he balked at compulsion. The Allotment Act proposes a purchase submission to planning and control. "They offer that money to get the farmers to sign up to be regu-

idea, and I can prove it. After Alexander Legge had come out here and told us we ought not to plant so much, it occurred to me that curtailment might be bought and paid for from the resources of the Farm Board. I wrote to the Board and suggested it. Nobody offered me a crown."

Here, bluntly stated, is the next step to which Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers are committed, the line they mean to cross.

Three books have been written thus far in support of the allotment proposal. The first, "Balancing the Farm Output," by the late Dr. W. J. Spillman of the United States Department of Agriculture, published in 1927, outlined a comprehensive but perhaps too elaborate system of induced reduction, applying to all farm products, with allotments farm by farm. In his more monumental and guarded, "Agricultural Reform in the United States," published in 1929, Dr. John D. Black of Harvard devoted a long chapter to the Spillman scheme, and suggested improvements. "Voluntary Allotment," the volume before us, reverts in part to the Spillman tenets. The $750,000,000 "adjustment fee" proposed by Professor Wilson and his colleagues, is, Dr. Edward S. Mead and Dr. Bernhard Ostrolenk argue, not enough. The annual impost must, they hold, be hoisted to 4.2 billion dollars, and paid not only to producers of wheat, cotton, hogs, and tobacco, as the Wilson plan proposes, but to growers of fruits, nuts, potatoes, rye, oats, barley, and flaxseed as well. Dr. Mead and Dr. Ostrolenk figure that this would cost consumers $35 per capita annually; but the plan so amended, they say, "offers an immediate and easy escape from the depression."

As one who favors the domestic allotment plan, and hopes to see it tried, I cannot but feel that at this point, and at others, Doctors Mead and Ostrolenk pump too hard. But their book is a good one: vivid, stimulating. The chapter in which (after the pattern of their previous "Harvey Baum, A Study of the Agricultural Revolution") they depict twelve long years of brutal deflation in terms of the effect upon Ole Swanson, a farmer in Yellow Medicine County, Minnesota, is masterly. And for one reason especially their small, fast-stepping volume deserves to be read and marked: it candidly exposes the wide departure from former standards, the promise, and the risks of the voluntary domestic allotment plan. I quote:

> The competitive system is breaking down. . . . One road leads to socialism. The other leads to controlled, orderly production within the framework of the capitalistic system.
>
> While Mussolini and Stalin issue orders, Roosevelt offers inducements. . . . It may be that out of the long and fruitless struggle of the farmer against natural law will come what the nation is anxiously groping after, a workable plan of economic balance and

a highly interesting study of the farmer in America.

These Words For a New Language

By MARY RAY MACCULLAR

MY love, I have come from the pasture-lands of the bees,
But I bring no honey for our table, nor berries for your wine,
Nor white-pistilled blossoms to stick in the cracks of the wall.
It is not that these were too fanciful to carry. More chimeras than these
I have crushed in my hand in coming, I have stayed to twine
In the mat of my hair. It is not that at all.

If I came from the wheat-country, I should not seek your oven.
Any wind at your window would pause to testify
That I brought you more chaff than powdery grain for your bread.

If I came from Alaska, I could speak of horned curls and feet that are cloven,
But I could not tell you how to catch a whale, or how wolves cry.

If I came from hell, I could not remember that I had been dead.

Indeed, I have come a long way, and I shall go
Farther. . . . I shall not die for many years,
But when I am dead, I shall be a beautiful skeleton, O my love.

Think of that if your head finds my arm too hard for a pillow.
Think of that when the first snow flies, when the yellow
And orange and amethyst of the tree of the dove
Fall to ash, and I cannot keep you warm with tears
Or touching you or laughing at the snow.

It is better that I should forget my country, as the arrow the bow.
It is better that you should know me inadequate now than to know
Bitterness after I go.

The Rollo Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

change, the more they stay the same—not quite the same of course, for we are a century further on, with, in Russia, a vast communal peasantry to propagandize, instead of a nation of individualists on the up and up, and a country to be industrialized over night, instead of a continent unconquerable until machines should be invented for it. We are further on here in our experiments—rampant individualism has been tried and reached its term, man must do more than respect his neighbors, he must coöperate or see his complex civilization crash.

Yet the moral drive is surprisingly the same; and therefore it would be well if the Russians and their American sympathizers should study what has happened to the dogmatism of the Rollo books—should discover how short-lived is the romance of work, how dangerous the attempt to force upon a generation of childish minds fixed ideas so fixed that when their admitted usefulness is past, the momentum goes on and on until karma overtakes it.

How Jacob Abbott would have relished the movies and the talkies! How he would have captured them and turned his little red books into reels! The Russians have an advantage there, but it may prove a deadly one. Not by words which may miss their mark but by vivid unforgettable pictures they are teaching their children and their backward adults that to share in the physical development of a nation is the greatest privilege, greatest happiness, indeed the sole end of man. We tried that a century ago, and considering the crudities of the little red school house and the naiveties of Rollo and Jonas, did an extraordinarily complete job. But what were we heading toward re they?)—a nation of robots or civilized men?

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Modern Sociology

THE BEGINNING OF TOMORROW: An Introduction to the Sociology of the Great Society. By HERBERT ADOLPHUS MILLER. New York: Frederick A. Stokes & Company. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by SHERWOOD EDDY

PROFESSOR MILLER is the well-known sociologist whose liberal views precipitated a controversy while he was lecturing at Ohio State University. His expulsion from the university, much to the discredit of that institution, gave nation-wide publicity to the lack of academic freedom and the absence of security of the teaching profession under the present economic order in this country. His present volume of modern sociology is, quite unconsciously, a vindication of the sanity of his own views and of the unreasonableness of the financial control of a state university which is supposed to be free.

The book shows the results of his wide travel and study as a guest of Mr. Gandhi in India, a friend of President Masaryk in Czechoslovakia, a student of the Russian experiment, and a discerning interpreter of present developments in China and Japan. Opening with four chapters devoted to the study of problems connected with the nature of revolution, nationalism, race, and the sources of Western civilization, he turns next to the Orient in a pragmatic sociological survey of the developments now taking place in Russia, Japan, Korea, China, India, and the Near East.

Professor Miller's study shows that we have long been conditioned to glorify war and to despise revolution. He calls attention to the increasing importance of revolution in the social process as following very definite laws which are at present little known. His chapters on race and nationalism reveal him as a specialist in these fields. Race has become an acute problem largely because of Anglo-Saxon prejudice and claimed Nordic superiority. Neither education nor religion seems to have much influence on race attitudes. Christianity professes an ideal of brotherhood which it prevailingly contradicts in practice, but Mohammedanism and communism have gone beyond race prejudice and exclusion in the beginnings of a classless society or an unbroken brotherhood. The final and distant stage may be a biological merging of all the peoples of the earth.

In the chapter on Russia Professor Miller shows that her people had long had a social pattern of communal life in the village *mir* and the *artel* as a coöperative productive organization as well as an absolutist experience under four centuries of Czarism which prepared them for the soviet experiment. The revolution transferred powers from the privileged three per cent to the ninety-seven per cent to whom it had been denied. For their icons many substituted first the picture of Marx and later that of Lenin. A fanatical religious spirit is the drive of communism, and the psychological basis of religion remains even with its atheistic professions which have sought to destroy its theological base. Soviet Russia is trying to compensate for the denial of economic freedom by greater liberty in personal morality. The abolition of private property has remained one incentive to crime and the Reform Labor code has worked a penal revolution which is without parallel in actual practice in any other land. While communism will do much to modify the change the world economic system the experiment is not final and some day a successor of Marx will indict communism for its restrictions as Marx challenged the evils of capitalism. It promises to be as inflexible and incomplete as the capitalist system. Its ideology will not become dominant over the psychology of countries like China and Japan which may absorb some of its doctrines but will never conform to its tyranny.

The chapters on Japan, China, and Gandhi are among the best in the book. As the book was published in 1933 it does not bring us up to date in many recent events, but as providing data and raw material for a sociological study of the changing Orient and the transcending of narrow nationalisms by the formation of the growing international Great Society, the volume is valuable.

Sherwood Eddy's "Challenge of the East," which has just now been followed by "The Challenge of Europe," is one of the most arresting discussions of the problems of the Orient in their relation to the rest of the world to have appeared in recent years.

Chronique Scandaleuse

REVOLUTION, 1776. By JOHN HYDE PRESTON. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1933. $2.90.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

IF the history of the American Revolution were in need of further debunking, Mr. Preston may be credited with a substantial contribution to the task. His raking attack on the sacred and his joyous exaltation of the profane have had, apparently, three incentives. One is "those fantastic fairy-tales we call textbooks," which have inculcated such legends as that the British army in America "was a model of efficiency and was defeated only because God was down on the Crown from the beginning." Another is the historians, some of whom "write of the Revolution as a holy crusade," while others, by inference at least, have imitated Bancroft in thinking that Washington "was God Himself and that nothing good could come from anybody else." The third is the artists, who have done "appalling" things to the Revolution (witness the "glorious lie" of "Washington Crossing the Delaware," with Washington "standing in (*sic*) the helm like some presiding angel guiding lost souls to heaven"), left it "not even recognizable," "embellished it with all the doodads of the gospel according to Bancroft," and made it emerge from their canvases "as a cluttered mess of holiness, sugarplums, and brassware." Such being the case, there was clearly need of a reformer, and Mr. Preston has sallied forth, not as a crusading knight to recover the holy places from the infidel, but as a remorseless spirit bent upon toppling the mighty from their seats and showing up the incapacity, venality, immorality, and horror of fifteen years of chaos.

The result is a book which does not lend itself to characterization in a single phrase. Mr. Preston has evidently made an intensive study of the military side of the Revolution, and his accounts of battles and campaigns are exceptionally clear and detailed. For this his vivid style, full of the vulgarisms of the tabloid but attaining at times, notably in the description of André's execution, a real brilliance, is an important help. The most striking novelty of the book, however, is that it brings together more material of the type of the *chronique scandaleuse* than has ever before, I think, been assembled in any one history of the Revolution. Unmindful, it would seem, of the fact that the truth and nothing but the truth does not necessarily mean the whole truth, Mr. Preston ferrets out one scandalous story after another for examination, acceptance, or dismissal, and strews his pages with references to drunkenness, profanity, army prostitutes, British officers' mistresses, and other savory morsels. One wonders at times how either army, the British deep in debauchery and the American adding starvation to drunkenness and lewdness, found energy to fight.

Precisely where Mr. Preston found the picture of the Revolution which he spurns is not clear, unless it be in out-of-date schoolbooks or histories which few people today study or read, but he attacks it as if copies cumbered every household, and splashes on his own assortment of colors with unfailing vigor and liveliness. He reminds us, for example, with a slap at the historians, that John Hancock kept quiet about the "huge warehouses full of smuggled tea" whose value would fall if the East India Company tea were landed, tells us once more that a good deal of the story of Paul Revere is fiction, and suggests that the patriots at Lexington drank too much before they fought. Israel Putnam is presented as "a bad general and a big bluffer," a "muddled egoist" with "a flair for self-advertising." The traditions that both a fog and strong northeast wind aided Washington's night crossing from Long Island to New York provoke more than half a page of comment, and the remark that, for the "older historians," "the correct weather was always the most dramatic weather, and they created whatever Nature failed to provide."

WASHINGTON AND LAFAYETTE AT THE BATTLE OF THE BRANDYWINE.
From "American Folk Art" (Norton).

The most scathing treatment is reserved for Washington. Mr. Preston lets slip no opportunity to tell us how heavily Washington could drink, how terribly he could swear (he seems to be acquitted of swearing at Lee at Monmouth), how much he was taken with the flirtatious wife of Nathanael Greene, and how incompetent he repeatedly proved himself to be as a commander. His expenses, we are reminded, "far exceeded any salary he might have had," and he perhaps "calculated the finances rather carefully" before refusing compensation. The story that Hamilton was Washington's illegitimate son is raked up for examination and refutation. Charles Lee, on the other hand, instead of being branded as a traitor and a coward, deserves "credit for having made one of the most rapid, intelligent, and far-seeing retreats of the entire war."

Fortunately for Mr. Preston, the last half of his book leaves a better taste than the first. There is less of personal scandal and more of really able handling of military operations. The description of the Yorktown campaign is admirable, and the account of Washington's dreary two years between 1781 and 1783 is distinctly worth while. It is pleasant to find such redeeming excellencies in a book which paints so much of the Revolution as a thing one would like to forget.

A prize of $10,000 has been announced by the Atlantic Monthly Press and Little, Brown & Company for the most interesting and distinctive novel submitted to them on or before March 1st, 1934. The competition is open to everyone, without restriction, except that the manuscripts must be typewritten and in English, and must not have been previously published or serialized; translations are ineligible.

Presenting Mr. Fox

UPTON SINCLAIR PRESENTS WILLIAM FOX. Los Angeles: Upton Sinclair. 1933. $3.

Reviewed by EDWARD KENNEDY

IN the fall of 1929 the motion picture companies of William Fox owed large sums which they could not pay. In the spring of 1930 a banking group which was also the largest creditor, took over control of the companies. Mr. Fox was paid $18,000,000 for his holdings, but his departure was most involuntary. "Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox" is the story of this crisis as told by Mr. Fox to Mr. Sinclair. If the book were admittedly fiction, it could be dismissed as such. But since it pretends to be an historical document, its influence may be out of proportion to its merit. For Mr. Sinclair can discuss his subject only in terms of assumption, aspersion, insinuation, and libel.

On page xii of the Prologue he says: ". . . the elder Pierrepont Morgan deliberately brought on the panic of 1907 in order to wreck and take over three independent trust companies." On page 82 of the text he says: "If Theodore Roosevelt is President . . . the only way you can make a merger is, first, to precipitate a panic, as the elder Morgan did in 1907, thus forcing from Roosevelt permission to take the Tennessee Coal & Iron Company into the steel trust."

The assumption that J. P. Morgan & Co. caused the panic of 1907 is in itself reckless and gratuitous. But it is even less permissable to argue at one moment that the banking house caused the panic to eliminate competitors and in the next to give as its motive the acquisition of Tennessee Coal & Iron. The association between the House of Morgan and panics is merely one of Mr. Sinclair's Articles of Faith, employed when it may be useful in furthering one of Mr. Sinclair's hallucinations.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Fox selected so poor an advocate, for his cause merits a more intelligent pleading. The banking group, as represented by Mr. Stuart and Mr. Otterson, did show the influence of personal animus as well as of banking principle. And they seemed at least as much interested in ousting Mr. Fox as in getting back the money which their companies had loaned him. The theory that they took from Mr. Fox a great business which he had built up and from control of which they were to profit mightily overlooks the fact that Mr. Fox had already burdened both his companies with a crushing debt. The theatre company subsequently went into a receivership, and the picture producing company is hardly in a thriving state. But it is difficult to understand how any bankers could have permitted the Fox companies to accumulate a debt of some $90,000,000 without raising new capital through the sale of stock and bonds.

But as far as Mr. Sinclair is concerned, the Fox case remains obscured rather than presented. The most unfortunate aspect of the Sinclair version is that many readers are likely to gulp it down as gospel. Perhaps the following considerations will in some measure act as an antidote. It was Mr. Fox, giving a demonstration of one-man control gone wild, who borrowed the money that put himself and his companies in their hole. It was Mr. Fox who bought 400,000 shares of Loews stock, despite the Clayton (anti-trust) Act which forbids acquiring the securities of a competitor without also purchasing its physical assets. It was Mr. Fox who then purchased an additional 260,000 shares of Loews, using the money of his companies but keeping the stock in the name of himself, his children, and his other relatives. It was Mr. Fox who, early in December, 1929, agreed that he and Mr. Stuart and Mr. Otterson could jointly vote the controlling Fox shares. But although when the agreement was signed he appeared to be on friendly terms with his banking friends, a week later he was attempting to repudiate the agreement on the grounds that he had been tricked and defrauded. And when Mr. Fox was finally forced to abandon ship, he swam ashore with $18,000,000 in his pocket and an extremely unseaworthy craft in his wake.

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One of the Olympians

MEMOIRS OF HECTOR BERLIOZ. Translated by RACHEL (SCOTT RUSSELL) HOLMES and ELEANOR HOLMES. Revised by ERNEST NEWMAN. New York: Alfred A Knopf. 1932. $5.

Reviewed by CARL ENGEL

THE Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation in Paris preserves among its many priceless treasures the holograph score of Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique." If the cautious white-bearded guardian of these treasures is satisfied that you have some claim to be admitted into his Holy of Holies, you will behold on the front page of that symphony's fourth movement, "La Marche au Supplice," the composer's puerile pen and ink drawings of chains and instruments of torture. Berlioz's whole existence turned out to be a "march to the gallows." Some of his tortures were imaginary, many were self-inflicted. He could be fantastic in his actions as well as in his music. With rare exceptions, his life and his work are marked with the sign of doom.

Berlioz was not the first to emphasize in a title the fantastic element of a musical composition. There are plenty of "fancies" and "fantasias" dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What he introduced into music was diseased fancy, if one may call it so; it was the musical *idée fixe*, or obsession, which threads its way through his Fantastic Symphony.

On December 9, 1932, it was one hundred years that the "Symphonie Fantastique," in its final form, had its first performance in Paris, and, in the composer's own words, "created a tremendous effect." Wagner, in his memoirs, said that the work had "much impressed" him. But that was many years after his first written comment on the symphony, in the Dresden magazine *Europa* of May 5, 1841, where he called it a "strange, unheard of thing," born of a "rich and monstrous imagination." In 1835, when the redoubtable F. J. Fétis published the second volume of his "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens," the learned but crabbed lexicographer characterized the music of the revolutionary young Berlioz as "Effects, always effects! that's what he sees in music, and, one might say, they make up three-fourths of his own."

Behind us lie one hundred years of "effects" in music; and if we want to measure all that this century has done to art, we need but review the evolution of musical "effects," from the "monstrous" ones of Berlioz to those with which our vanguard tries to woo and rouse a jaded ear. While the distance covered is great indeed, the direction has not changed.

Therein lies perhaps one reason why the memoirs of Berlioz, his keen observations on the music and musicians of his day, still hold our attention with an almost contemporary application. The road he opened is still our road; the foes he thought he had slain by the wayside still lie in ambush; his deceptions have survived his conceptions. And therefore, again, the story of the man as told by himself with all the inaccuracies, prejudices, exaggerations, and omissions, stands a fair chance of outliving the music he created and for which he fought so gallantly and so bitterly.

Berlioz was the arch-type of the "romantic" in the pathological sense of the word. With Rousseau's followers he shared the need of "confessing" himself. If the confession served the dimly felt purpose of working a catharsis, the recital nevertheless was chiefly undertaken for the sake of "effect." It is the *idée fixe* and *Leitmotiv* of Berlioz's autobiography, or collection of autobiographical sketches and travel accounts. It often mars the pleasure of the reader. For nothing seems to age more quickly than "effects." And this, no doubt, explains to a large degree why, after all, the fantastic "story" of Berlioz's life seems today the duller part of his memoirs; why the fate of this confirmed eccentric impresses one as wholly consistent with his nature and as fully deserved. To be sure, for the most part it is a sorry tale, wilfully so at times, and often quite unintentionally. As a study in "emotional crises" the book has not lost its fascination. But even upon such matters we look nowadays with less sentimentality and with a more discriminating eye. He was a child of his generation, "conceived between two battles." And he battled his whole life long; battled with adversity and adversaries; but chiefly with himself.

Not the sensualist that Wagner was, Berlioz nevertheless talked and wrote a good deal about "love"; it was one of his obsessions; but what he experienced of it was mostly the smarting wound. He suffered not only from De Musset's *mal du siècle*, but fell a victim to the *mal d'amour*, without ever experiencing the solace and fervent tranquillity bestowed upon the human heart and mind in union with the perfect mate. Julien Tiersot has said that Berlioz's love for the English actress, Harriet Smithson, was "le plus beau phénomène que l'on connaisse de romantisme vécu." Then may a kind providence defend us from romanticism, or let us admit that there is no immunity from its deadly virus.

Berlioz's memoirs end with some melancholy reflections on the two pervading objects of his life: "Which of the two powers, Love or Music, can elevate man to the sublimest heights? It is a great problem, and yet it seems to me that this is the answer: Love can give no idea of music; music can give an idea of love. Why separate them? They are the two wings of the soul." One of these wings of Berlioz's soul was badly scotched in the flying; with the other he managed to soar aloft and find his perch on Olympus.

HECTOR BERLIOZ AND HIS BIRTHPLACE.

Retrospect

MEMOIRS OF A MISSPENT YOUTH. By GRANT RICHARDS. New York: Harper & Bros. 1933. $3.50.

Reviewed by TEMPLE SCOTT

SPEAKING for myself, the reading of Grant Richard's book has been an interesting and pleasurable experience. Perhaps this is because in this reading I relived "the romantics of the 90's" which I had seen being performed on the literary and publishing stages of that vaudevillean decade. And "rum-antics" they were, especially as one sees them now in the retrospect of almost half a century—the gatherings at the dinners of the Vagabonds Club, the social crushes in the limited apartments of Douglas Sladen, the "mimeings and mimblings" of the minor poets in the "cafés," the slippery descents and the tortuous ascents to and away from Vigo Street and the "Headley Bod," the prowlings of the prudes to the obbligato of Mrs. Ormiston Chant, the daredevils at the restaurant known as "Jimmy's," the barkings of the "Yaller-Bok," the impudent struttings of the "Aub-Aub Bird" and "the stumious Beerbomax," the literary and artistic celebrities who gathered in the saloon bar of the Crown "pub" at the corner of Cranbourne Street and Charing Cross Road, the promenaders at the Empire and the Alhambra—all these appear now like the harlequinade of an old-time Drury Lane pantomime, as they pass before us in the pages of Grant Richards's "Memoirs."

Yet, despite the seeming "rumminess" of these actors, they were in deadly earnest and many of them highly gifted and accomplished. They did not realize that in these performances they were really bidding farewell to the Victorian Age and ushering in a new era. The celebration of the Jubilee of Queen Victoria's reign had spread a glamor and had almost cast a spell as of an enchantment which were difficult to overcome. But overcome they were, pertinently as well as impertinently; and if this compelled antic performances these were, at any rate, the outcome of a sincere desire for freedom of expression. We may smile at these antics now, yet we may not ignore them, for they stood for ideals, and the players were loyal to their visions of beauty.

It is of these performers, as he came to know them in the days of his apprenticeship to the publishing business, that Grant Richards writes. He writes as if he treasured his memories of them and as if he were heartily glad he had, perhaps, misspent his youth in coming to know them and to enjoy their friendly companionship. Some of them are still living and their glory has not yet departed from them. Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Max Beerbohm, Will Rothenstein, Quiller-Couch, and Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes are names publishers still conjure with. Others, though lost to sight, remain in many living memories — Oscar Wilde, Aubrey Beardsley, Ernest Dowson, Grant Allen, Edward Clodd, Israel Zangwill, George Moore, and Phil May. And Grant Richards steeps these in the atmosphere of his own enjoyment of the pleasant hours he spent in their company—hours which must have been a strong contrast for him to the days of his earlier youth which strike the reader as being bleak, barren, and of slow growth under depressing drudgery. But it was when he came to work with W. T. Stead for the *Review of Reviews*, and to come into closer relations with his uncle, Grant Allen, that his world took on brighter colors for him, and enabled him to see a purpose in life. As secretary to Stead he was independent of his father's financial help and could seek experiences further afield. He found them in occasional visits to Paris, where he met Will Rothenstein and Phil May and enjoyed the gay and seemingly carefree life of Montmartre. Of these visits to the French capital Grant Richards writes with alluring gusto. As the pupil of Grant Allen, that most kindly and engaging of man, he learned more that contributed to his soul's growth than he is probably aware. One would wish to know more of his intercourse with this uncle of gracious memory.

I am hoping that this volume of reminiscences is but the forerunner of at least another, for Mr. Richards concludes it almost abruptly on the very eve of his entering on his career as a publisher. He should have much to tell us of the years that followed that adventurous undertaking. I shall look forward to the story of that adventure; it should make interesting reading.

As reader for Grant Richards in his own youth, Mr. Scott can speak with special pertinence on his book.

The Inner Man

HE WENT AWAY FOR A WHILE. By MAX MILLER. New York: E. P. Dutton. & Co. 1933. $2.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE author of this book will be remembered for his "I Cover the Waterfront," a book made up of his experiences as a reporter on a San Francisco newspaper, and a singularly perceptive and sensitive piece of work. His present book is a chapter of a spiritual autobiography, so intimate that he must call its hero "He," and never any other name. When he had saved six hundred dollars, he gave himself a vacation from being a reporter and went and lived alone in a shack overlooking the sea. Here he got away from the crowds of people by whom he had been surrounded all his life; he indulged in the luxury of looking at things without thinking of the newspaper; and above all he thought about everything that came into his head, from God to a daddy-long-legs. There are a few skilfully introduced bits of information about his background, as that in his parents' home no book was ever read, and no subject ever talked about, except the Bible, but in the main it contains only his experiences and speculations.

It is perfectly and frankly inconclusive. Nothing important, externally, happens; and Mr. Miller does not achieve any decisions about the problems he considers; at the end he contemplates going back to his old job, and knows in advance exactly what it will be like. But it has a peculiar charm, in spite of inconclusiveness, or perhaps because of it, for its inconclusiveness is a part of its author's beautifully friendly candor. He tells you with the same absolute honesty how he felt the need of women and what he thought about God; he is probably quite aware that some of his speculations about God are a little naive, but he is quite content that you should have them for what they are worth. The book has a quality that is fairly common in poetry but very rare in prose, that of admitting the reader at once to the closest intimacy with the writer, yet without any embarrassment.

It is a book that is more valuable for what it suggests than for what it says. Its author is a master of the difficult art of *suggestion; without saying a word about* it, he knows how to convey his deep satisfaction of soul in at last thinking for himself and his belief that though he may seem to have got nowhere, the same old job will never be really the same, now that he has thought his own thoughts. It is a book that superficially seems almost slight, but one which will be found germinating in one's mind after more pretentious and insistent pieces of writing have vanished.

Lady (William) Watson, according to the London *Observer*, quotes Byron to show that the poet Moore was known not only as "Tommy," but as "Tom": the one name which never seems to have been applied to him was Thomas. Passing on to Carlyle, the *Observer* says that to a few intimates he was "Tom," but none got so far as Tommy, just as there can never have been a Bob Browning.

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Portrait of a Woman

HARDY PERENNIAL. By HELEN HULL. New York: Coward-McCann. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

IN each of Helen Hull's novels,—and the list is growing imposing,—she attacks some one particular angle of modern life. One result of this strategy, of course, is to demonstrate the versatility and ingenuity of the author, but another, inescapably, is to reveal a certain lack of homogeneity so that when the name Helen Hull is mentioned no body of work springs at once to the mind as it would in the case of most other contemporary novelists who have staked out their claims in the literary field more definitely. Modern life and woman's relation to it would be, perhaps, a general covering description, but within its generality each novel stands cut off from others by reason of its own intense individuality of approach and presentation. Each Hull novel is a little picture of contemporary life, but each one is carefuly framed and no one leads on to the next.

HELEN HULL.

In last year's "Heat Lightning" Miss Hull gave a situation, a group, an atmosphere. One still remembers the close-pressing threat of summer days in that story of family life; after "Hardy Perennial" one will remember only Cornelia Prescott. For in this novel Helen Hull has created a woman.

Cornelia is about forty years old. (Was there ever a time, by the way, when people considered Balzac's "La Femme de Trente Ans" advanced in years?) She has a life behind her, she has a life before her. Husband and children have occupied the former, but now they have grown out into little worlds of their own and Cornelia is left islanded. Having devoted so much of her time to others, she has yet escaped the blight of non-personality. She has builded herself bit by bit from the things she has loved, from the things she has feared. Meeting life clear-eyed but acceptingly, she has been neither deceived nor cowed by it. Now at forty, having come successfully thus far she sees ahead, in place of quiet reward, futility and loneliness.

Cornelia's husband can be summed up in a sentence: he succeeds on success. Under the stimulus of admiration and appreciation he is both genial and generous. But under discouragement and adversity his shoddy pleasantness wears through. With unemployment and the tawdry ending of a tawdry little affair with his secretary, he is back on Cornelia's hands to be remade out of her abundance or to be thrown aside by the hysterically moving life which he so loves. Cornelia may put the pieces of Horace together again, but as soon as the last one clicks into place there will be, not something new, but the old boastful, egocentric Horace once more.

And where is the solace in Cornelia's children? David whom she has had warmly with her through the many years of his illness needs now for himself his freedom from her. This, too, Cornelia gives. The other two children are, while coldly seeing through their father, really miniature replicas of him. Cornelia, with her children, is childless.

But none of the foils against which Cornelia is shown and none of the adversaries against whom she fights are worthy of her. She is alive, the other people in the book are patterned figures. The situations are made to order. There may be only a few complications into which the relationships of men and women fall, but these may have the breath of life in them or they may not. In "Hardy Perennial" the triangles and quadrilaterals seem shabby with over-use.

Miss Hull has done for a New York apartment what English authors have done for country houses, what regional American writers have done for provincial living places. She has made it familiar ground where the reader comes and goes with the characters. One remembers the steps down into the living room, the terrace below which lies Central Park with the man-made, man-lighted towers of Manhattan opposite, and the star-pricked blackness of the New York night sky above.

In Würzburg

THE SINGERS. By LEONHARD FRANK. Translated from the German by CYRUS BROOKS. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1933. $2.

Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

IN "The Singers" the author of "Carl and Anna" looks back from maturity and success to his native Würzburg, "where the Main describes its loveliest curve as it sweeps through the town, where thirty soaring, patinated church-towers dominate the city, where nothing has changed for generations," where he, himself, as the son of a poor carpenter, had a tough enough time of it as a boy.

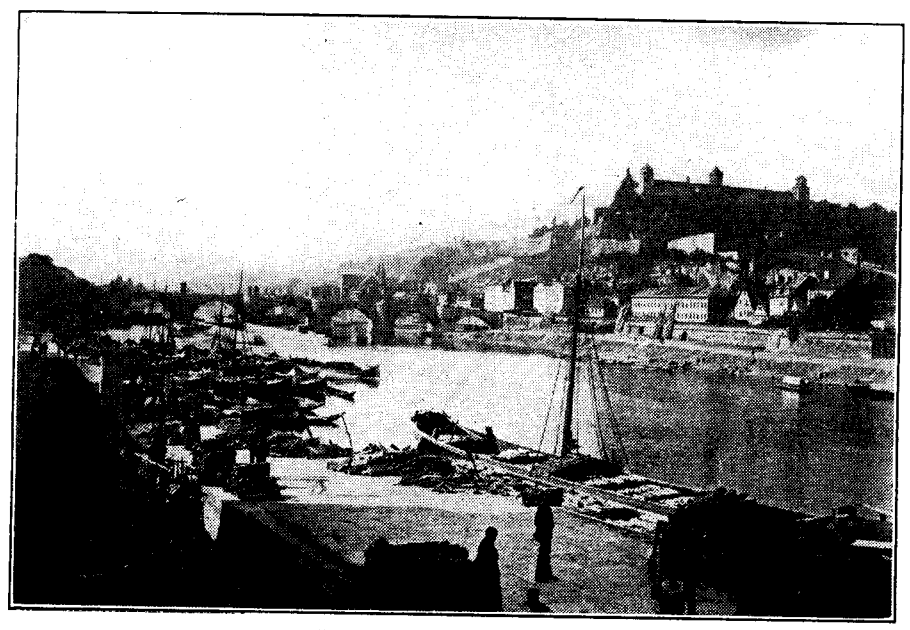
It is a sentimental and sensitive, affectionate and penetrating look, the verbal expression of which doubtless carries all sorts of implications which escape the ordinary long-distance reader. Much that seems rather pretty and self-conscious, too intently "diminutive" when read in the clear, cold hullaballoo of a New York winter morning, is doubtless felt quite differently by its German author.

What Herr Frank is aiming at, I suppose, is to reproduce the texture of such a German provincial town, not as it was when he himself was a youngster, but at the moment when "the war and all that followed it had changed credit notes and savings bank books into waste paper." We are to see those quaint old crooked streets and all those quaint old stick-in-the-mud, Christmas-cardy, petit-bourgeois townspeople, suddenly caught and chilled in the wintry bewilderment of inflation, unemployment, and financial ruin.

It will not be an objective, realistic picture—the author is too much a part of the thing he is writing about, it impinges too certainly on that which is softly and sentimentally felt in his own memory to be that—for that. And yet all through its caressing and literary head-patting, there will constantly thrust little penetrating flashes, deep and penetrating, of the perception and understanding of the adult man.

Thus, at any rate, "The Singers" comes to this detached and foreign reader. The singers themselves, the four flabbergasted Würzburgers who tried to find a way out of their sudden poverty by buying some second-hand dress-suits and setting themselves up as a serio-comic male quartet, seem to me quite unreal—pictures from a Christmas card or from the frieze of some small town beer hall. The same, or much the same, with Herr Well-well, the crafty examining Magistrate, and the whole rather preciously told episode of the supposed murder. Dr. Huf, the congenital skeptic, doomed always to let life escape from his grasp just as his fingers were closing on it, and his wraithlike sister, I do not "get" at all, or at least not clearly.

More real is the young girl Hanna, and wholly so the almost pathological treatment of her symptoms of adolescent passion. Here the author ceases quite to be the reminiscent Würzburgian and writes authoritatively as the adult novelist. Thomas, the boy who loved her and won her completely at the last, Thomas the gardner-student, with his post-war keenness for sport, intelligent interest in economics, and straightaway, objective way of looking at life, is most understandable of all—possibly because we have many boys just like him at home.



WÜRZBURG AND THE RIVER MAIN.

A Barrowful of Tales

DON JUAN AND THE WHEELBARROW. By L.A. G. STRONG. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933. $2.50.

ALTHOUGH the sixteen stories in Mr. Strong's new collection are remarkably varied, three distinct groups emerge. The largest, which includes nearly half the book, might be labelled as analytical character sketches, most of which are polite in tone and present conventional people in more or less conventional attitudes. They are often admirably done, with the vivid coloring which the author can attach to the most commonplace incidents, but their quality is not on the whole as great as that of the second group, which is in dialect and includes the title story. Devon has furnished Mr. Strong before now with many curious characters and lively anecdotes, comparable to "Red Ball," "Don Juan," and "Hospital Feet" in this volume. Finally, there is a third category, also rustic but not in dialect, which includes the unusually brutal "Good Riddance," undoubtedly the most memorable story of the lot.

The great qualities of Mr. Strong's firm and closely knit prose, the flashes of descriptive lightning which were present in his earlier stories, are still evident. There are perhaps signs of flagging imagination in some of the more detailed pieces, such as "The Big Man," but the author's work has been so rich in these things and so far from the average machine-made product that perhaps unconsciously a special and not entirely fair standard has been created. Certainly many of the sketches here are as good as anything of the sort being written today, yet they will fail to convince most of his admirers that he is not more at home in the novel form, where a greater scope may be found for characterization. The really terrifying murder, recounted in cold blood with infinite skill, in "Good Riddance," is the exception which shows Mr. Strong at his best. The effect, grotesque or not, is one that few living writers could attain.

The Theatre

TWENTIETH CENTURY. By BEN HECHT and CHARLES MACARTHUR. At The Broadhurst. To be published in book form in April by Covici-Friede.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE literary feat accomplished in this new offering of those indefatigable theatrical collaborators, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, is the creation of the character of Oscar Jaffe—though this new play of theirs is subtitled "based on a Play by Charles Bruce Millholland," and hence one is in some doubt as to how much credit, after all, to allot that latter worthy. For book form, as we write, the manuscript is still in process of revision. We must therefore judge the work of what is, in reality, a triumvirate, solely by the stage picture.

Oscar Jaffe is a sort of combination of the late David Belasco and the mighty Sam Goldwyn. He is incredible, except that he is probably *under*drawn, if anything. He is a deeply significant portrait of an impresario. His continuous display of bogus temperament furnishes a most amusing evening in the theatre, even though the otherwise excellent Moffat Johnston, who acted the part, seemed to us sometimes to slow the pace of the dialogue in order deeply to shade his interpretation.

Lily Garland is another brilliant and convulsing picture of an up-from-noth-

BEN HECHT.

ing actress and movie-star, unscrupulously fascinating. Miss Leontovich coruscated in the part. As a whole, the rapid-fire comedy, often bursting into sheer farce, offers opportunity for all sorts of adroit and ingenious stage mechanics. In fact the settings of the piece are at least a quarter of the fun. What meets the eye is as diverting as what meets the ear, though the dialogue is peppered with good lines throughout.

The farcical situation of the—well, not the god from the machine, but rather the "angel" from the asylum—seems rather to fumble its surprise element. And Etienne Girardot was so perfect in the part of this religious lunatic, Matthew Clark, that his seemed at least half the character's creation. Jaffe's myrmidons were also extremely well interpreted.

The debit? "Twentieth Century" gives evidence of haste in construction. It seems rather slapped together. It is, with slight hitches, continuously funny, and yet we can only mark Mr. Hecht and Mr. MacArthur about 80% upon it. Some of their characterizations are mortal sketchy. Their Doctor Johnson seems dragged in, their Grover Lockwood and Anita Highland to be very imperfectly realized, their young George Smith a character with comic potentialities that are never brought out, and the First and Second Beards of the Passion Play not nearly as funny as they should be. With these dire strictures we must, therefore, salt our appreciation of what made in the main a highly diverting evening! We may add that to us Oscar Jaffe is as glowing a satirical creation as was Mr. Glogauer of "Once in a Lifetime."

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Here Are Ladies

OTHER WOMEN. By KATHARINE BRUSH. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1933.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

YOU will know the town of Renwood if you have read that best of Katharine Brush's novels, "Red Headed Woman." Renwood is as characteristic of America as is Sinclair Lewis's "Gopher Prairie," and if as many words have not been written about it, it is nevertheless "all there" in Miss Brush's pages—"all there" at least in regard to its feminine element.

Don't run away with the impression that Renwood is a "small town."

It should be explained that this was an understatement, and a grievous one. The population of Renwood was 25,000 —28,000 if you counted Renwood Falls and Renwood Heights (and why not count them?). Presumably Louise Bartlett, after five years, knew these figures. Presumably she knew that this was no

KATHARINE BRUSH.

town, but a city, with a Mayor and Aldermen and all those things. She must have known. But she was not impressed.

That was because Mrs. Bartlett had come originally from Pittsburg. And so in the first story, "Ladies with Lipsticks," we are introduced with delicate but devastating irony to all the "grand" things she did for those women in Renwood she made her particular friends! Next comes Mary Marek, of the "Dark Tears," whose return to Renwood after quite a long time is a nicely handled bit of tragedy. Then "There was Amy Williamson," the blonde widow. She sold gowns. She also had her own private joke on the city of Renwood; and on Mrs. J. K. Matthewson. Here is sharply pointed irony. There was also jolly Georgina Leslie who never married, though she could have married John Riggin. She didn't know herself, at first, why it was. Then she suddenly discovered that she'd really been in love all the time with Jim Buhl, who was married to Sarah. Further, you should meet Miss Annie Baxter, of a Wednesday—it was on Wednesday evening she always attended divine worship. The peeker and pryer and gossip of the community, she is shown at her most harmful all that day. There is fine Brush work in this portrait—her finest. The pathetic history of Ruby Fuller with the naturally footloose Gil the Life Guard ends this section of the book.

In the second section: In "Norma Williams" we have what is really a study of a little boy on the morning when his mother is to marry again. "Jill," the football girl, is a mere clever *College Humor* sketch. "Town Girl—Dorothy M'Henry," is also college stuff, though absolutely authentic. "Him and Her—The Doctor's Wife" is triumphant in its tangential method. "Glamorous Lady—The Actress" is a fine small irony. "Maid of Honor" ends the book with a positive "knockout" of a story, one of the best of Miss Brush's that we have read.

Indubitably this woman writer knows a variety of women, sees all around them; views them both with sympathy and without illusions; sketches them to the life. Her detachment is admirable. So is the absence of sentimentality in her work. There is no overstress. It is full of exact and telling touches. She is steadily developing a dextrous and sapient art of narration.

THE LOVELY LADY. By D. H. LAWRENCE. New York: The Viking Press. 1933. $2.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THE only true and honest answer to Juliet's immortal question, "What's in a name?" is: "Frequently nothing; a good deal often; and sometimes a great deal." That which we call a rose may, as the lovely daughter of the Capulets insisted, smell as sweet, no matter what we choose to call it; but we cannot dodge the disconcerting fact that a mere name will often befool us into accepting a scentless flower as the sweetest of blooms.

Would these seven tales, for instance, which comprise "The Lovely Lady," without a signature command the same interest and respectful attention that they do bearing the now magical name of D. H. Lawrence? Would they, if anonymous, unmistakably display the stigmata of genius, or would they seem merely products of a talent that was experimenting in an attempt to find its best vein amid the possibilities of narrative technique? All reading is an act of collaboration, and it is, I suppose, one of the rewards of successful authorship that most of us are readier to collaborate with a favorably known writer than with one who is unknown. Indeed, for purposes of sound criticism, we are often over eager; we contribute more than our share of the teamwork. Looking earnestly for certain things in a piece of writing, we persuade ourselves that we have found them whether they are there or not. Self-delusion proves a specious substitute for artistic illusion. We have been bewitched by a name.

But let us come down from generalities to the particulars of the case before us. What would we make of these seven tales if we came to them ignorant of their authorship? We can only guess, because we are not ignorant; but my guess would run as follows. "The Lovely Lady":—A somewhat melodramatic study of egotism feeding on the lives about it, which strains our credulity because of its author's clumsy reliance upon soliloquies spoken into a convenient and communicative rainpipe. "Rawdon's Roof":—On the surface, an ironic little anecdote. Perhaps the writer meant us to discover much beneath the surface, but just what I am not sure. "The Rocking-Horse Winner":—An impossible story, told with an intensity that compels our belief in what we know to be impossible, that thrills us with a sense of genuine horror. By far the most exciting and the best knit of the seven. "Mother and Daughter":—Another study of parasitic egotism and possessive motherhood, but in a lighter vein than "The Lovely Lady," and distinguished by one delightfully humorous character sketch. "The Blue Moccasins":—Possessiveness again—this time it is a possessive wife—, but the author's touch is not sure, and the tale breaks down in the telling. "Things":—The story of an idealistic couple from New England who went to Europe to "live a full and beautiful life." It might have been written by Dorothy Parker, and might, but for its length, slip unobtrusively into the pages of *The New Yorker*. "The Overtone":—A tale that runs from prose into poetry; a hymn to the flesh that is itself full of overtones, and which tells how two lives were made sterile by a young wife's momentary failure to share her husband's mood and longings. In this story, and this alone of the seven, we might possibly read the name of Lawrence without having it spelled out for us.

Ticking off our findings then, we are left (or I am left, at least) with only two stories that are at all remarkable. Without the name of Lawrence to bestir me, I should never dream of rating this collection on a level with the best of Coppard, of T. F. Powys, or of Katherine Mansfield; I should fail, I am sure, to find these tales either "important" or "significant." But those who believe in names will seek, and doubtless they will find. To them we may leave the solemn task of relating these posthumous scraps to the living body of Lawrence's work. To them we may leave the genuflections with which many good folk salute genius, even in its less inspired moments. They may, if they will, weave words around the artist who depicted an anthropophagus world, wherein character feeds upon character. If they enjoy that kind of pretentious nonsense, they are welcome to it. For my part, I shall say, "Pretty good stories," feel that the time spent in reading them was not wasted, and let it go at that.

A Chronicle of the Sea

THE SEA WITCH. By ALEXANDER LAING. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1933. $2.50.

THIS is a very rich book, a chronicle, a novel, an adventure story, a romance. The chronicle is best, and indeed it is hard to say where one can find a better account of the clipper ship and the China voyage and maritime New York of the period. Mr. Laing has got his history admirably; he knows his ship, for the *Sea Witch* herself, that consummate creation of functional art, was a real vessel. The races to China and back with tea are as realized in the detail which strikes the imagination as Melville's stories, and like them are raised, as is proper in a chronicle that is to recall life as well as facts, to a plane in which storms rush, sails tighten, men suffer, and beauty and hardship mingle as if transcribed from a moving picture in the creator's brain.

The adventures are equally satisfactory, and the romance, if tenuous, does not fail. Shanghaied on the ship for whose figure head he had reproduced the lovely body of his brother's wife, the young artist is in love with the *Sea Witch*, the girl, and with beauty. He sacrifices his career in order to devote his life to his three ideals. But the novel in which the narrative, the description, and the philosophy were all intended to sublimate, is not so successful. The sea, the *Sea Witch*, the pursuit of glamour, the hard wills driving beautiful machines across the ocean, interest the author (and the reader) more than the triangle plot that is supposed to hold all together. As in "Moby Dick," the grandiose conception, the exciting facts, and the narrative by no means always "jell." This story is no "Moby Dick," yet "jell" or not "jell," it is a deeply interesting book. The characters move behind a veil of illusion. Even Roger, the dandy, the sea-will incarnate, pushing the *Sea Witch* over the longitudes, is a symbol. The reader must seek saga in this book, not fiction; then he will not be disappointed. And he should read the Appendix first.

Purest Powys

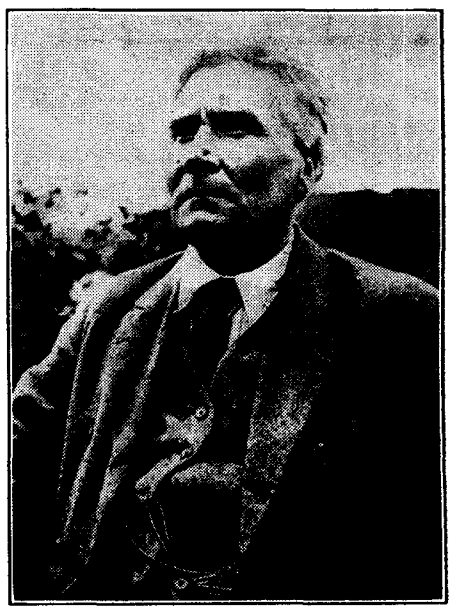
THE TWO THIEVES. By T. F. POWYS. New York: The Viking Press. 1933. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY

THE peculiarities as well as the curious power of Mr. Powys's work are by now sufficiently well known to make any discussion of his merits as a writer largely an affair of personal taste. Few authors of the day are more strongly individual, and few cause more violent likes and dislikes. The reasons for this will be so apparent to anyone who reads the three long stories in his new book that it is not difficult to estimate what their reception will be. They are purest Powys and will consequently please those who are attuned to his manner and enjoy his sardonic humor, while disgusting those to whom his simplicity is a pose and his earthiness mere obscenity. And it is safe to add that there will be no lukewarm intermediate body of opinion.

The three stories in "The Two Thieves" are parables, of which the first is the most easily digested. It is an unusually direct narrative for Mr. Powys, who seems content to omit the fantastic element so often present in his work. His young farmer struggles with an unfriendly nature. Unable to obtain more fruitful acres, he dreams of finding consolation in the charms of the daughter of his more fortunate neighbor. In Mr. Powys's special way, she is shown to be the feminine equivalent of the coveted land. Again denied, the farmer at length seeks freedom to sow his seed as he wishes—in death. The technical strength and grim, unsmiling quality of this tale make it remarkable even in the canon of Mr. Powys's work.

On the other hand, there is a less real atmosphere in the second story, "God," in which, as in "Mr. Weston's Good Wine" and other of his earlier books, Mr. Powys displays his faculty for infinitely reverent mockery of established—and hypocritical—religious ideas. The story as a whole is



T. F. POWYS.

an astonishing *tour de force*, performed on the single idea that a child becomes convinced that his father wears God to church every Sunday in the form of a tall silk hat. Needless to say, Mr. Powys supports this most practical conception of the Divinity against some of the more widely accepted ones, and shows in the end how beneficent this God of Johnnie Chew's can be.

Finally, the title story resembles most closely the author's best previous work. The Devil, as a pedlar, and Death, as a tinker, appear in Godsbarrow. Under their influences George Douse acts out an allegory of worldly greed and repentance which is conceived and executed in the familiar and always inimitable Powys fashion. This story, more than either of the others, shows the characteristic blend of poetry, fantasy, and humor which gives all his work its value. A kind of Shakespearean crudity and violence in his characters, who are often prophetic idiots, lost children, Rabelaisian innkeepers, and the like, when they are not definitely supernatural, is also an important factor in making all that he writes richer, grander, and more strange than the less debatable productions of his contemporaries.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Current Books:

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This Less Recent Book:

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A vivacious life of the composer.

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Contemporary German Letters

MODERN GERMAN LITERATURE. By ARTHUR ELOESSER. Translated from the German by CATHERINE ALISON PHILLIPS. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1933.

Reviewed by B. W. HUEBSCH

IN the ordinary course this volume would have slipped into and out of our world with only slight notice, but Mr. Lewisohn's accolade, in the form of a laudatory introduction, is a challenge to closer examination. It proves that his heart has got the better of his "ancient wisdom and austere control," for the object of his praise is not "in itself a liberal education" or "a full and wise and magnificently balanced treatment."

The book is of smaller value to the stranger in the field of modern German literature than to readers whose acquaintance with the cultural history of the nineteenth century Germany makes them readily receptive. Those who approach it for information will be thwarted, for the author evidently wrote for home consumption where the allusions common to

LION FEUCHTWANGER.

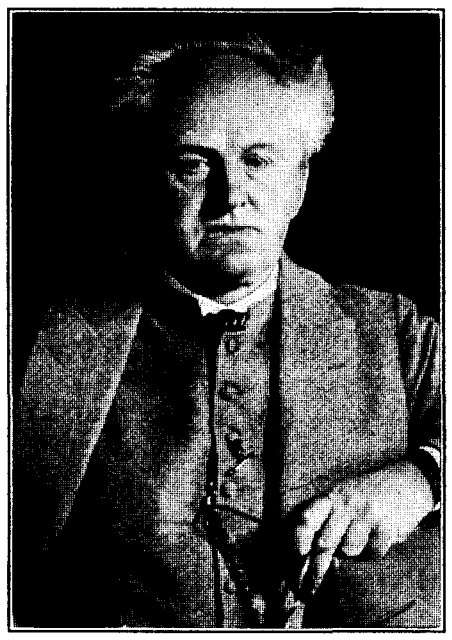
such a work require no explanation. Whoever is familiar with German letters will respond to Dr. Eloesser's effort with the interest that an erstwhile traveller takes in a casually discovered guidebook to a land that he knows. His favorite haunts may be omitted, his opinions of folk and places controverted, yet he reads on because it serves to recall some perfect hours.

So great an interest in German literature has developed here in the last twenty years that a critical informative study is almost overdue and any work that aims to fill the bill, even though an indifferent one, represents a laudable endeavor and is entitled to consideration. Fully one-quarter of Dr. Eloesser's book is devoted to the naturalistic school and its greatest exponent, Hauptmann, to whom, by the way, he does a disservice in failing to mention his failures. Hauptmann is great enough to have his failures recorded. The author's interests and sympathies lie in the product of the late nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, and his comment on the generation that was young then rings truer than that on the writers who are today between twenty and fifty. A fundamental weakness lies in his too great identification with the rise of naturalism in German letters, which he takes to be a culmination instead of merely an important stage of evolution.

Dr. Eloesser writes in the mode of the past, his tastes are of another day, he is committed to the ideals that gained his youthful enthusiasm. By statement and omission he intimates his lack of sympathy with the men who succeeded his own idols. The younger generation, he says, "quite overlooked the fact that the poet lawgivers of old had been aged people of mature experience, and that Jeremiah had rebelled against the prophetic office imposed upon him by God because he was still too young. And "the young people had in the end to recognize that they had achieved nothing capable of holding its own by comparison with the strong and fruitful generation that had produced Hauptmann, Dehmel, Stefan George, and Thomas Mann." Always the crime of youth!

It is the author's right to recognize or ignore writers at will, yet this chronicle raises afresh the nice question of a historian's responsibility. Consider, for example, the failure to mention, among war books, Latzko's "Men in War" which, besides being a good book was an event of international importance because of its bold defiance. What of the conspicuous absence from these 416 pages of Emil Ludwig's name? One of the best story-tellers in Europe is Robert Neumann; one of the most prominent young lyricists — playwright, too—is Richard Billinger; a more than adept fantast, author of a dozen books, is A. M. Frey; a very interesting all-round figure is Egon Friedell; narrators varying in appeal but of recognized gifts are Raoul Auernheimer, Willy Seidel, Kurt Heuser. Dr. Eloesser does not include even, "among those also present," any of the above names, although he does present Karl Benno von Mechow, Ernst Penzoldt, Hertha von Gebhardt, Hans Blunck, John Brinckmann, and others of merely local renown who cannot be said to be superior to those ignored.

Dr. Eloesser's method of instruction is not too clear to the newcomer in the German field; he will tell you that "Heiberg stood nearer to Raabe . . . he shows the greatest fidelity to Raabe," but unless one has studied German letters, "standing nearer" to Raabe and being faithful to him means nothing. Again: "Hermann . . . followed Fontane's more tranquil methods



GERHARDT HAUPTMANN.

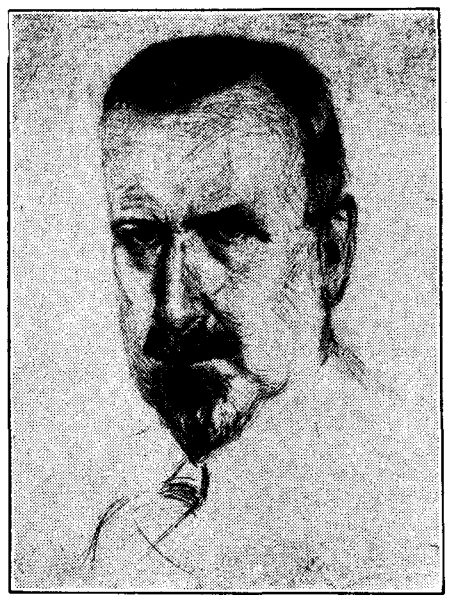
. . . Hermann next returned to the manner of Fontane." "Another follower of Fontane was Heilborn. . . ." ". . . as is clear from the example of Fontane. . . ." Thus Fontane is mentioned thirteen times, but never will the tyro discover when Fontane functioned or what he wrote. So much for an outstanding novelist of whose "Effie Briest" a conservative English authority wrote: "It occupies a permanent place in the fiction of this time." Considering the space allotted to the Anzengrubers and the Rosegggers, it cannot be argued that Fontane is excluded by the time limit. Similarly there are thirteen blind references to Theodor Storm. But Dr. Eloesser will spend three pages on Hermann Conradi even though it is his opinion that Herr Conradi "is one of the worst of German prose writers"; and of his poems, "They contain much rhymed rhetoric . . . enthusiasm for sins he had never committed," etc.

Dr. Eloesser is almost the drillmaster lining up his troops; "Julius Hart occupied a place between Henckell and . . . Arno Holz"; "Hesse a place between Freud's . . . and Nietzsche's . . ."; "Stehr's spiritual domain lay between *Hannele* and *Emanuel Quint*"; "George Engel . . . stands somewhere between Frenssen . . . and Sudermann," and Friedrich Griese's "place on the literary map is somewhere between Frenssen and Selma Lagerlöf."

Some gratuitous comments, such as an offensive one on Count Keyserling, should have fallen before the blue pencil.

The translation is of a strangely uneven quality. In large part it reads excellently. Elsewhere Mrs. Phillips flounders and often gives an impression of great self-distrust. A hundred times (at least) she adds, quite unnecessarily, the original German of words and phrases. "You have hit the mark" is the English for *Sie haben den Punkt getroffen;* "earnestness" for *Ernst;* "case," for *Fall;* "work of art," for *Kunstwerk;* "relapse," for *Rückfall.* It would be unfair to point out such minor errors as creep into many translations; for example, Dauthendey did not write in 1867; he was born in 1867. But Mrs. Phillips lays herself open to criticism for so often failing to free herself from the yoke of the author's sentence structure. There are moments in which she seems to sink under the burden.

Until a very good book on the subject is written, this one of Dr. Eloesser's will stop the gap, for it offers a painstaking and informed orientation in the period that en-



HEINRICH MANN.

gages his sympathies. As to his treatment of his active contemporaries, many may prefer the judgment of the author to that of his critic.

A Good Anthology

THE GOLDEN BOOK OF ITALIAN POETRY. Chosen and edited by LAURO DE BOSIS. New York: Oxford University Press. 1932. $4.

Reviewed by GIUSEPPE PREZZOLINI

AN anthology is meaningless if it happens to represent only the personal taste of a man, even the most gifted in the world; it is an episode in his life, a revelation of his personality, but nothing more. If, on the contrary, it represents the taste of the entire generation of a certain period, then the anthology is an historical document.

Mr. Lauro de Bosis's anthology may really be considered not only the work of a man endowed with a fine and cultivated mind, but also an index to the general taste of the Italians after 1910. In other words, he has succeeded in gathering a series of poems which every cultured Italian who reached manhood about that period would recognize as the best in our literature. Of course, everyone of us has his own preferences; hence there is no anthology in the world to which we would not make some additions, or in which we would not make some changes. This holds good as regards Mr. de Bosis's anthology, notwithstanding the fact that the judgment of the average contemporary reader would, I think, be favorable.

It is especially by comparing it with older anthologies that the real value of this one may be best realized. What it leaves out and what it introduces are perhaps its most significant aspect.

In recent years Italy has undergone a profound change in the evaluation of its literature. Criticism has given a new value to heretofore unrecognized writers, while at the same time stripping others of their laurels. With Croce, emphasis has been placed on poets free from pedagogic, oratorical, and rhetorical elements, even if their language is incorrect and their expression uncouth. Writers having the pathos of ideas have been preferred to accepted writers who had only an agreeable surface of harmonious words to offer. Lyricism and philosophy, pure art and ideas have been preferred to mere literary polish and decorous versifying.

When in 1910 Croce offered a tentative catalogue for a new collection of Classics (now published by Laterza under the title of "Scrittori d'Italia") Renato Serra, with his fine sensibility, immediately perceived that there was a departure from the taste theretofore dominating—the taste of Carducci. The latter was a great poet and a sound and healthy personality, but in criticism he was rather partial to the classic form. His understanding of philosophy and religion was meager. Croce laid emphasis on the trecento and ottocento; Carducci on the cinquecento. Croce sought to rehabilitate the seicento which Carducci detested. Southern writers ignored by the Tuscan Carducci were regarded as important by Croce.

The anthology compiled by Mr. de Bosis exhibits this new trend. Take the "Oxford Book of Italian Verse," published in 1910 by Mr. St. John Lucas, and observe the treatment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: it is full of petrarchesque poems. None of them is to be found in Mr. de Bosis's book. Molza, Guidiccioni, Di Costanzo, Celio Magno, Annibal Caro, etc., which in the "Oxford Book" filled about thirty-five pages, all of them have been excluded. Della Casa, Gaspara Stampa, and a few others, have been reduced to a minimum. De Bosis has given the citizenship of Italian poetry to Tomaso Campanella, the philosopher, mystic, and social reformer, with six powerful poems, titanic even though obscure.

Almost all of de Bosis's anthology is in harmony with the new program. And for that reason it is highly recommendable to readers of Italian who wish to familiarize themselves with the new literary taste of Italy. This does not, however, mean that Mr. de Bosis's work is flawless. Indeed, if we examine it from the very point of view adopted by him in his selection, we cannot help noticing certain flaws. Obeying perhaps impulses other than those of his esthetic taste, he has included the "Inno di Mameli," which does not possess the same poetic substance as the other poems selected. It is, no doubt, the most beautiful political hymn of the Risorgimento, but even so it lacks the high lyricism possessed by the other pieces chosen by de Bosis with a sparing hand. Other sentiments surely must have made him indulgent toward the poetry of Mr. Adolfo de Bosis, his father, a very fine and noble man indeed, but one whose poetical achievements could never have won him a place beside d'Annunzio, Pascoli, and Gozzano, who represent the Italian poetry of the post-Carduccian period in this Anthology.

Lastly, I cannot understand why Mr. de Bosis should have mutilated Carducci's "Ode al Clitumno" by omitting eight stanzas. The fact that they were anti-Christian is no excuse. As it is, the poem is almost unintelligible. How can the reader understand "i foschi dì passâro" without the preceding stanzas? And what is most astonishing is the fact that while omissions in other poems are indicated by a line of dots, in the poem in question no dots but two blank lines are found.

I may add that a very useful appendix to the Anthology would have been a small glossary of words that the ordinary foreign reader, even if well versed in the Italian language, may not know. For example, how many English and American students of Italian would understand "abentare," "ricadia," "bombassi"—words which are not to be found in the average Italian-English dictionary, nor, for that matter, in many small Italian dictionaries?

The *Book Collector's Packet* announces a Bibliographical and Typographical Tour of Europe for the coming year, apparently to be made by the Editor, who will issue numbers of the *Packet* from Europe.

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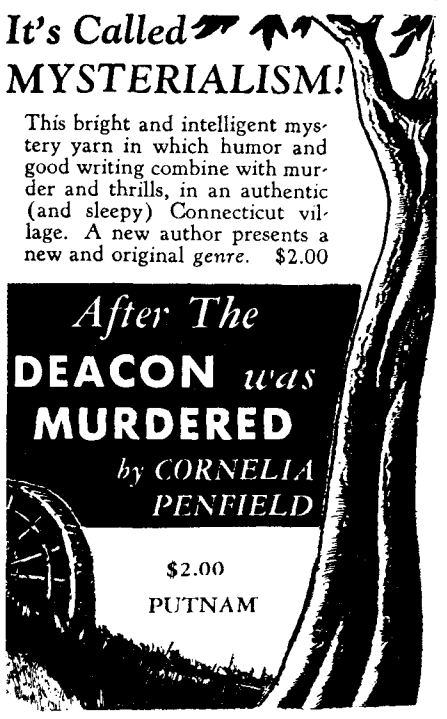

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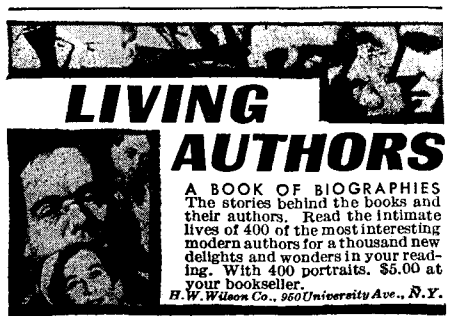
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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Art

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN, HIS LIFE AND TIMES. By C. WHITAKER-WILSON. McBride. 1932. $3.

There is, of course, no reason why an appreciation of the life and professional achievements of a practitioner of any branch of the Fine Arts should not be sympathetically and intelligently set forth by a member of any one of the other professions, if strictly from the standpoint of an amateur. If the reader bears this in mind, as the author asks, and does not take the architectural comment too seriously, he will enjoy what is in this case a sprightly narrative rather than a "Life."

Mr. Whitaker-Wilson considers himself no pundit architecturally. Thus his sentimental enthusiasm for certain associations, mainly musical, in connection with Wren's monuments—from St. Paul's Cathedral to the fifty odd London Parish Churches,—as evidenced by his great pleasure in citing the fact that Mendelssohn played the great A Minor Fugue by Bach at Christ Church in 1837, is to the author quite as pertinent as the fact that one of the two pulpits in this church happens to be a superlative specimen of the work of Grinling Gibbons.

For the reason that he hopes among other things that his book may "serve as some sort of guide to visitors from other lands—America especially,"—it is to be regretted that the influence of Wren's genius as reflected in eighteenth century American church architecture, notably St. Michael's at Charleston and the Center Church on the Green at New Haven, was not at least touched on in this treatise.

In this connection, the author, an evidently keen admirer of King Charles I, might be interested in knowing in the event he is not already aware of the fact, that one of that monarch's judges—John Dixwell—lies buried in the shadow of that Connecticut spire so directly traceable to the work of his hero.

Fiction

MISS CHARLESWORTH. By MABEL L. TYRRELL. Stokes. 1933. $2.

This English novel belongs in the class of competently written and well constructed stories, with no claim to being a great book but with nothing to be ashamed of in the way of mediocrity. It has indeed one quality which lends it real individuality: while written in the tone of what might be called—in the best sense of the word—a society novel, far removed from the modern mystery story, it does yet contain a mystery, whose solution at the extreme end of the book possesses distinct values. The plot through which the characters move is complex, but well constructed and adequately handled. Its central feature is the love affair of an older man—with peculiar difficulties of his own—and a charming young girl, genuine on his side but with a high ulterior motive on hers. With courage Miss Charlesworth breaks through this false situation and others as well, assuring to the girl her life with the boy of her own age who loves her, and straightening out whatever can be adjusted in the tangled situations that have developed. It is possibly a considerable complexity in the extensive plot that makes the reader aware that it has indeed been constructed with care. But interest and good writing should, in judging the book, be given their due.

Miscellaneous

LOS ANGELES. By MORROW MAYO. Knopf. 1933. $3.

All California and converging tourist trails will like this tale, which is suggestively subtitled: "A History with Side-Shows from the Conquistador to Aimee Semple McPherson." Those of us who don't like Los Angeles will like it (the tale), those who feel bound to like Los Angeles will be amused by it, and Los Angeles, upon the theory that to succeed is the greatest proof of success, will recognize the advertising value in it. A city that in 1932 outdid previous Olympiads without going into the red can rest secure amid its archieves of reading notices.

Beginning his story with the founding in 1781 of the pueblo or town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels, and describing its subsequent growth to a "hell-hole of the West," Mr. Mayo engagingly offers information upon the booms and budgets, the men, manners, and methods that have converted into an inland seaport of first rank on the coast, a community in which only 5% are native born citizens, and 80% of its other boosters imports from the small-town and rural purlieus in a back home East. Mr. Mayo, onetime a California newspaper man, predicts that after Los Angeles's present area of 442 square miles fills up, the phenomenal activity of the populace will yield to the soporific effects of the mild climate. But the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce—a most energetic body—have arranged for that, and they are already adding more letters to those quarterly 90,000,000 pieces of advertising matter in which, you can bet on it, the name Los Angeles somewhere appears, further epistles designed to show the superiority of the climate of southern California to that which is experienced "back East."

ART

Rembrandt. Studio. $2.

BELLES LETTRES

Goethe's Centenary Papers. E. M. Schutze. Open Court. $1.25. *A Psychological Approach to Literary Criticism.* N. R. F. Maier and H. W. Reninger. Appl. $2. *An Essay on Politics.* T. R. Brenton. Oxford Univ. Pr. $1.25.

BIOGRAPHY

Grain Race. A. Villiers. Scrib. $3. *Viva Villa.* E. Pinchon, Har., Bra. $3.25. *I Have Been Young.* E. Lomond. Har., Bra. $2.50.

DRAMA

The Lost Plays and Masques. G. M. Sibley. Cornell Univ. $2.

ECONOMICS

Economics of a Changing World. H. V. Hodson. Smith & Haas. $2.50. *Perpetual Prosperity.* G. H. Hull. New Era.

FICTION

The Opera Murders. K. Williams. Scrib. $2. *Tale Husband.* M. A. Hopkins. McBr. $2 net. *Millstones.* W. Collison. McBr. $2 net. *Lose With a Smile.* R. Lardner. Scrib. $1.50. *This People.* L. Lewisohn. Harp. $2.50. *Three Novels of Love: The Dark Flower; Beyond; Saint's Proggress.* J. Galsworthy. Scrib. $2.50. *The Legend of Susan Dane.* R. C. Mitchell. Appl. $2. *The Stranger on the Island.* B. Whitlock. Appl. $2. *The Saltmarsh Murders.* G. Mitchell. Macrae-Smith. $2. *Fog.* V. Williams and D. R. Sims. Hough. Mif. $2. *Light Again.* B. Niles. Liveri. $2. *The Fletcher Omnibus.* Knopf. $2.50 net. *The Sinner.* I. J. Singer. Liveri. $2. *Papa La Fleur.* Z. Gale. Appl. $1.50. *The Tragedy of Z.* B. Ross. Vik. $2. *The White Gambit.* C. Beadle. Paris: Palais-Royal Press. *Delicate Fuss.* F. Klickman. Put. $2. *Murder at Cambridge.* T. Patrick. Far. & Rine. $2 net. *Woodrow Wilson.* J. K. Winkler. Van. $3.50. *Men of Morgan.* J. M. Reynolds. Appl. $2. *The Men of Ness.* E. Linklater. Far. & Rine. $2 net.

HISTORY

The Rise of American Civilization. C. A. and M. R. Beard. Macmil. Revis. ed. $3.50.

MISCELLANEOUS

All in the Day's Riding. W. James. Scrib. $2.50. *Hollow Folk.* M. Sherman and T. R. Henry. Crowell. $2. *Making Life Better.* E. Worcester. Scrib. $2. *The Way of Escape.* P. Gibbs. Harp. $3. *Sweeping the Cobwebs.* L. J. Martin and C. de Gruchy. Macmil. $1.50. *Dining and Wining in Old Russia.* N. N. Selivanova. Dut. $2.50. *New York University.* E. T. F. Jones. N. Y. Uni. Press. $3. *First Aid to Marriages.* M. Marriner, M.D. London: William & Norgate. *Degenerate Democracy.* H. S. McKee. Crow. $1.50. *B. E. F.* W. W. Waters. Day. $2.50. *Knowing and Helping People.* H. W. Dresser. Beacon. $2.50. *The Death of Billy the Kid.* J. W. Poe. Hough. Mif. $1.25. *The Adolescent Boy.* W. V. Richmond. Far. & Rine. $2.50 net.

SCIENCE

Chemistry Triumphant. W. J. Hale. Will. & Wilk. $1.

TRAVEL

Magic Waters. G. T. Seton. Dut. $3.75. *Islands Far and Near.* R. H. Davis. Appl. $2.50.

Fiction Leaders

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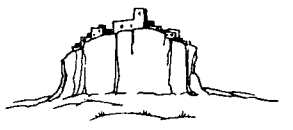
by D. J. HALL



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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

K. D. G., Spokane, Wash., asks for the source of the expression "ivory tower" as isolation, a viewing of the world from a superior vantage point. He has "tried all handbooks in vain."

EVERY now and then someone wants to find, somewhere in literature, the original location of the "ivory tower": the first time I traced it down, I remember, was for the late Gamaliel Bradford. This inquirer "fancies Browning may be the villain," and Anatole France is another popularly credited with the phrase. For that matter, he did use it, but as one taken for granted in the vocabulary of a French man of letters. But so far as I can find, the onlie begetter was Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, who in his "Pensées d'Aout" (1837) speaks of

Vigni, plus secret,
Comme en sa tour d'ivoire, avant midi,
rentrait.

He speaks of Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863) "soigneux et fin," least typical of the Romantics, author of "Servitude et Grandeur Militaire," the first, he himself said, to write poetry in which "une pensée philosophique est mise en scène sous une forme epique ou dramatique." It was of him that Ratisbonne wrote "une de ces pensées de toi, ô mon cher maître! . . . elle est poétique, recherchée dans son tour, mais exquise." Jules Sandeau summed up this quality in a phrase perfectly pat: "Personne n'a vécu dans la familiarité de M. de Vigny, pas même lui."

The phrase connotes less a sense of superiority than of detachment, the deliberate withdrawal of pure art from life's mêlée—perhaps also the elevation of the spirit when art partakes of the nature of philosophy. And just to save the time of other correspondents, I do know the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, with its call upon "Tower of Ivory," and I know that the human neck is thus described in the Song of Solomon, and I have heard of the gate of ivory in the sixth book of the "Æneid," through which come deceptive dreams, the dependable ones choosing the gate of horn. However these may have been at the back of the mind of Sainte-Beuve, it is his famous image and none of them, that we mean when we use the phrase in speaking of a mental attitude.

F. B. W., Kansas City, Mo., asks which novel, which drama, which biography should in my opinion receive this year's Pulitzer Prize. E. T. S., Columbus, O., asks on what grounds "Of Thee I Sing" received it last year. I never quite know why anything gets one of the Pulitzer Prizes. Their chief value—apart from the fact that any money comes in handy to almost any author this year—is in the nationwide outburst of discussion almost sure to follow the announcement of the awards. Out of such discussion something like popular standards of literary taste may slowly emerge.

If this discussion sometimes has difficulty in finding a point of departure, the Committee only has itself to blame: it is a trifle upsetting to see (in the "World Almanac" of this year, where all the winners are named) the statement that the prize went to Mrs. Buck's masterpiece for a novel "preferably one which shall best present the whole atmosphere of American life." The drama prize went to the "original American play performed in New York which shall best represent the educational value and power of the stage." My own notion is that in each case the prize may have been thus awarded because there would have been rioting in the streets if it had not been; in the case of "Of Thee I Sing" this would have been led by all the critics, literary as well as dramatic, and on the edge of the company this department waving its hat and hopping up and down.

But if I am asked what books I would like to see crowned by the Pulitzer this year, they would be these: Ellen Glasgow's "The Sheltered Life" (Doubleday, Doran), not only on its own merits but in recognition of the long and steadily maintained development of Miss Glasgow's art; Van Wyck Brooks's noble "Life of Emerson" (Dutton), rich, sound, imaginative. If George Cohan's "Pigeons and People" should be chosen as the play, they would crown my choice as the highest work of dramatic art—pure Pirandello and pure U. S. A. as well. For the history prize I wish the completion of Mark Sullivan's "Our Times" (Scribner) might be thus signalized. For the poetry prize, I should like to see a posthumous award to "Collected Poems of Elinor Wylie" (Knopf), the highest point of poetry publication of 1932, though if the stipulation of "work done during the year" be taken literally, then Archibald Macleish's "Conquistador" (Houghton Mifflin).

This is no prophecy: but I think a good many readers beside this one would be pretty well suited by such action.

H. H. B., Lowville, N. Y., asks if "Little John Bottlejohn," one of the most popular poems in Laura Richards' "Tirra Lirra" (Little, Brown) has been set to music. In the year 1885 Waldo S. Pratt edited a collection of "*St. Nicholas* Songs" (Century), a volume that found its way at once into many homes. For then the piano was still not only in the parlor but in use; people sang in their homes, and poetry for children was largely composed with the possibility that it might be sung. The astonishing feature of the book, however, is that it is still in print; it costs $2.50 and is in the catalogue of the Century Company; in it one may find not one but three settings of "Little John Bottlejohn," by Albert A. Stanley, W. W. Gilchrist, and George F. Bristow. Her "Punkydoodle and Jollapin" has four, and three more of her songs are here set to music. I hope the fine collection of "New Songs for New Voices," published a generation later by Harcourt, Brace, has taken root as firmly in the American family as this songbook of the eighties; of the same general nature, its poems were of a higher order of literary merit. However, "*St. Nicholas* Songs" is nostalgic enough for a good many American poets: Louis Untermeyer says music began for him with it.

M. E. L., Eau Claire, Wis., finds no biographical material on Maximilian, the Emperor of Mexico. It is assembled in two large volumes in Count Egon Corti's "Maximilian and Carlotta of Mexico," published in 1928 by Knopf—a profoundly moving book, less for skill in presenting its facts than for the thoroughness with which the heart-racking facts are marshalled. Not the least piteous are the pictures, for the most part reproductions—not especially good—of contemporary photographs; here in one is Franz Joseph in hussar's elegance, the Empress Elizabeth as a tender young mother, Rudolf a happy baby, Maximilian yet on safe ground as an Archduke, and Charlotte a cheerful bride. It would be hard to find a heavier collective doom than hangs over the pretty party. Or there is the reproduction of Maximilian's manuscript rules of conduct he always carried about with him: "Take it coolly" he sets down in English, and adds "It is from flying alone that I look for extraordinary experiences." Considering that he stood for nationalization of Church property his tragic story takes on a certain present interest.

A. P., Cambridge, Mass., wishes to go on reading letters as interesting as those of R. L. Stevenson, which he has just finished. The most important literary letters of the year, and to my mind one of the most illuminating books on the processes of authorship and their weaving into the pattern of life, is "The Letters of D. H. Lawrence" (Viking). The most sparkling letters in a long time are "The Letters of Jane Austen," lately brought out by the Oxford University Press in two volumes: what delicious reading they are if one loves the novels, and if one does not know them, how rapidly they will cause the novels to be read! There is a new volume of the Modern Giants, the series of extra-large volumes of the Modern Library, which has all the novels of Jane Austen in one book. The only possible objection to such a bargain might be that it would induce a reader to go rapidy through the lot—and Jane Austen must not be read rapidly: the whole thing jams if you do. A decent conversational pace, and never mind about catching that train.

Cecile Sorel, the famous French actress, whose retirement from the Comédie Française will probably take place before long, is said to be writing her reminiscences.

The Viking Galley

SHARPLY DIVIDED is the fast growing audience of Erskine Caldwell's GOD'S LITTLE ACRE. Shocked were some by its outspoken frankness. Delighted were others (viz. Alexander Woollcott, F. P. A., John Cowper Powys, Marc Connelly) by the lusty humor which flavored that frankness. No one has yet been found who failed to finish it—to be intensely gripped by it—to laud without stint its author's skill. ($2.50) **WHERE OTHERS** see only meaningless crowds, Albert Halper sees real people, human characters, strange types who work, hate, love, who fight for lost causes. Where others see a tiny park just like a thousand other city squares, the author of UNION SQUARE sees a storm center, the melting pot of New York's teeming millions. The Literary Guild Selection for March (and a book you're going to hear more about.) ($2.50) **COLLECTORS PLUS.** THE LOVELY LADY, last fiction from D. H. Lawrence's pen, proved itself more than a collector's item. Welcomed as well by the wider reading public, these seven short stories are poignant proof that he died at the height of his powers. **SOMETHING SINISTER** in laughter claims Anthony Ludovici who proceeds to prove it in his provocative THE SECRET OF LAUGHTER called by Aldous Huxley "the completely satisfying hypothesis", while Compton Mackenzie counters "it is one of those books which make the reader long to argue with the author on every page". ($1.75)

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Points of View

"Whither Thou Goest"

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: "What can be more glamorous than one's *third* trip to London?" asks your correspondent, M. L. S. I strongly suspect that ones' *first*, straight on up to one's twenty-first might be the right answer. For I have just made my first, and the way I feel about London, an infinite number of visits would be too few!

If M. L. S. heard "Ruddigore" on its opening night at the Savoy, he must surely have recognized two Chicagoans in about the fifth row center—marked unmistakably by a dinner coat in a sea of tails. But as a matter of fact, I don't like "Ruddigore," and I don't see how anyone who has absorbed the utter felicity of "Iolanthe" or the "Gondoliers" can tolerate, much less praise, the gaucheries and false notes of this lapse of genius! And don't think I'm not one of the most ardent G. and S. enthusiasts either, because I am. Why, we pursued the D'Oyly Carte Company across the whole of Devonshire—"Iolanthe" in Plymouth, the "Mikado" and "Patience" in Bristol; and came back across the Channel instead of sailing for home from Le Havre just to hear the "Gondoliers" in London.

But to say, as your correspondent does, that this was a Gilbert and Sullivan *revival*, is, I think, to give a wrong impression. In England, Gilbert and Sullivan can never be revived, because it never languishes. Nor will it, I should think, as long as there exists the superlative D'Oyly Carte Company whose sole function is to sing Sullivan's music as it should be sung. What is wanted is a revival in *this* country strong enough to persuade D'Oyly Carte to try us again.

One word more about Gilbert and Sullivan. Did you ever penetrate to the lower levels of the Savoy Hotel where the D'Oyly Carte Company has offices? Their big conference room overlooks the Embankment at the precise spot where that lovely, abandoned figure of grief mourns the master.

And speaking of London, as we were several paragraphs ago, I must thank you for making me buy Bone's "London Perambulator" which certainly ought to be required reading for any potential traveller to London. It's a grand book if there ever was one, and now I have the additional satisfaction of knowing that it's all true!

Literary Intelligence: If you are persuaded of the perfection of A. E. Housman's writing, you will be as horrified as I was to know of his implacable decision concerning the disposition of his unpublished writing. Mr. Kingsford of the Cambridge University Press (which has on its Fall List "*M. Manilii Astronomica*, Recensuit A. E. Housman") told me that Mr. Housman has in his desk a sheaf of really fine essays which he is determined never to publish. Can nothing be done?

Chicago, Ill. MARJORIE TYLER.

The Years of Peace

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR: Unless you have a very short memory you must be experiencing some pain over the poor public reception that is being given to Le Roy Mac Leod's novel 'The Years of Peace," of which Mr. Morley wrote so favorably in the Book-of-the-Month Club News.

I became interested in the book through a review in the New York Times Book Review. Some features of the plot as therein related gave me the impression the book is unusually good. I induced our Public Library to order a copy, but several months passed before the copy came and I could read it. From the very first line my interest was absorbed. I forgot my surroundings and was back again on the farm of 45 or more years ago, following the plow along the furrows, seeing the blackbirds and crows, going through the droughts and wet spells, going along the lanes and roads to the villages and towns.

To me one of the tests of a great book is tears, manly tears I would call them. And tears came as I read where Evaline tells the imbecile Ella she shall stay at home from school, or on reading the letter from Evaline's father about the death of her brother, again where Evaine goes out that afternoon, finds Tyler and goes and meets the children coming from school, or at the end where Tyler and Evaline stand on the porch in the moonlight and recall another night like that years before. Oh the poetry, the philosophy, the humanity, the realism, the tenderness of it all! Two beings—man and woman, both imperfect, erring and regretting, and then trying to do better, struggling along, somehow living and growing together, or at least respecting each other.

CYRUS H. ESHLEMAN.

Ludington, Mich.

The Northcliffe Prize for the best French novel of 1931 was awarded not long ago to Jean Schlumberger's "Saint-Saturnin." The book was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in this country.

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The Divine Comedy

THE DIVINE COMEDY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI. Verona: Printed for the Limited Editions Club by Hans Mardersteig. 1932.

THIS is another monumental edition of the "Divine Comedy," so large that it can only be comfortably read from a lectern. It has, indeed, the look of a book "appointed to be read in the churches," with its large and handsome type (Bembo), and its large size. One may demur at the excessive bulk and area: but the printing is of first quality as one would expect from the Officina Bodoni. The Bembo type is one of the very finest fonts of recent years, clear, lacking eccentricities, and with some handsome individual letters. The paper is a soft, wove sheet from the San Marco mill in Milan. The five hundred pages are devoid of any suggestion of decoration: there is a very good but severe title-page.

The binding is unusually good, being cloth from the Fortuny mills in Venice, woven of rose and buff in an all-over pattern of striking and pleasing design. We agree with Mr. Macy that this is a gorgeous binding. R.

Ancient Writings

ANCIENT WRITING AND ITS INFLUENCE. By B. L. ULLMAN. New York, Longmans, Green & Co. 1932. $1.75.

FOR the series of small handbooks called "Our Debt to Greece and Rome" Professor Ullman of the University of Chicago has prepared a volume on ancient writing. This small book is one of the best introductions to Greek and Latin palaeography and their influence on the later writing of Europe which I know. The book and its various components—paragraphing, punctuation, abbreviations, etc., considered the relation to the present day practice of printing, where ancient usages have become canons of modern use. A series of excellent reproductions of ancient handwriting have been included, and there is a short bibliography. The book should be in the hands of all students, printers, and book lovers. R.

THE First Editions Club of London has issued as a slim quarto an article, first published in the *Architectural Review*, on "Lettering" by Percy Smith. The book is set in Centaur type and printed on gray paper.

The Woodcut Society

MR. ALFRED FOWLER of Kansas City has formed the Woodcut Society, with the purpose of publishing original woodcuts for its members. It is hoped to have a membership of two hundred, and the dues are $10 per year, for which each member will receive at least one proof each year of an original wood block.

MARK TWAIN'S THE NOTORIOUS JUMPING FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY. New York: Duschenes. 1932.

THIS is a small, carefully printed edition, for private circulation, of Mark Twain's story, with some bibliographical information.

MILTON'S L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO. Glen Head, L. I.: The Ashlar Press. 1932.

IL PENSEROSO in Caslon roman, L'Allegro in Caslon italic, in two thin, demure volumes, each with a delicate wood block by Rudolph Ruzicka, one volume in black paper, one in white. Delicately conceived and executed, these two books are good examples of a very refined typographic style. R.

"A DEFENCE OF IGNORANCE," by L. A. G. Strong, has been printed for the first time as the initial number of a series of "Crown Quartos," by the House of Books, Ltd., New York. Why should a book which measures 5 x 7½ inches be called a "crown quarto," when it really is (approximately) a "copy octavo"? R.

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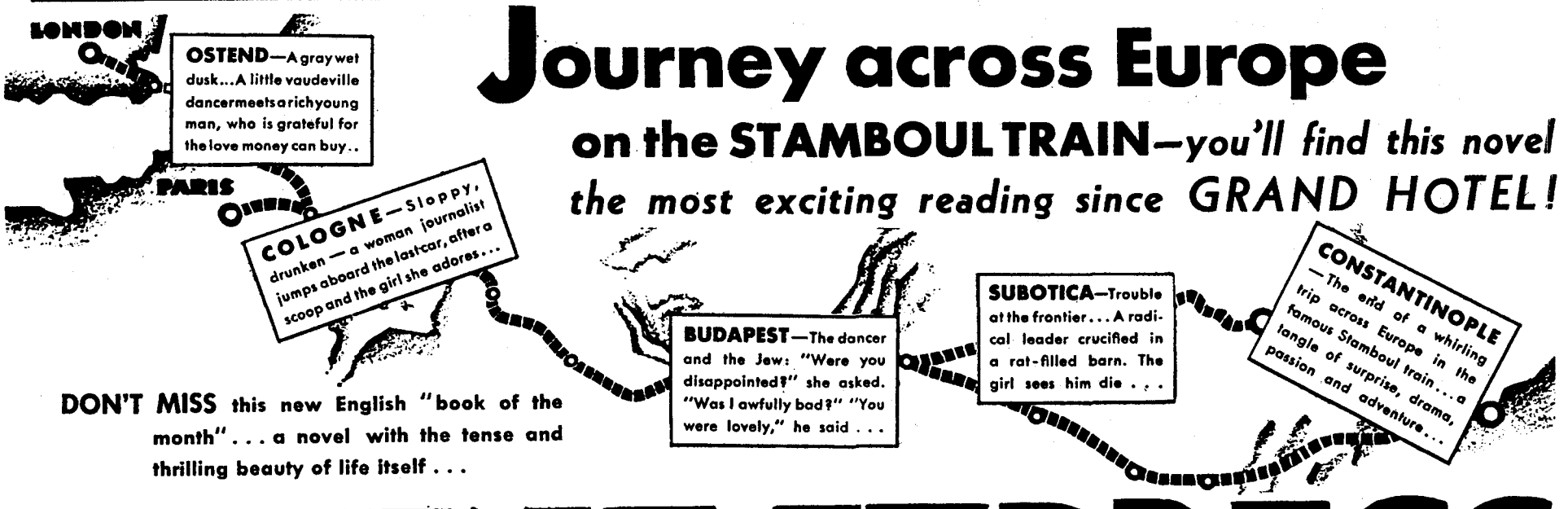
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News from the States

What the SATURDAY REVIEW *most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to author's activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Booksellers' anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.*

ARIZONA

Frank C. Lockwood contributes the following from Tucson:—

In Arizona the sun shines bright, the goose hangs high, and the literary firmament is filled with stars. *John T. McCutcheon,* who has taken a house in Tucson for the winter, was a guest of The Tucson Literary Club—a company of sixteen professional and business men—at its monthly dinner and program in December. Mr. McCutcheon is limiting himself to one cartoon a week during his long vacation in the Southwest.

Mrs. Robin Hunter gave a dinner for a number of her friends at the Arizona Inn, in Tucson, in February, in honor of her countryman, *Dr. Oliver St. John Gogarty,* previous to his lecture on "Incredible Culture." In addition to the distinction of being the sister-in-law of the Irish doctor, senator, poet, and wit, Mrs. Hunter is one of the proprietors of the University Square Bookshop—a favorite rendezvous of writers, University people, and tourists. Among the guests at the dinner for Gogarty was his fellow countryman, neighbor, and friend, *Mr. Richard Burke,* a famous flying man, now residing in Redlands, California. He came over to hear the lecture; and both men being skilled pilots, they took various jaunts by airplane through southern Arizona.

March 22 *Walter Hampden* is to present "Hamlet," and "Caponsacchi" in the Temple of Music and Art to Tucson audiences. Mr. Hampden appeared triumphantly last year on the same stage in "Cyrano de Bergerac." He is received in Tucson with double pleasure by virtue of the fact that *Mr. Paul Dougherty,* his brother, the distinguished marine painter, endeared himself to the community during a recent residence of two or three years.

Mr. Leo Crane, author of "Indians of the Enchanted Desert" and "Desert Drums," after two years of invaluable service to the state as Secretary of the Penitentiary at Florence, has retired to his ranch at Greaterville—one of the romantic placer-mining towns of Spanish and Mexican times. He will there continue to exercise his pen on Arizona themes. At the time he entered the service of the state he had almost completed a very important book on the Colorado River.

HAWAII

A further instalment from *Clifford Gessler,* of Honolulu, informs us:—

Important changes in the personnel of two leading Honolulu bookstores are to be announced soon.

The world premiere of *Glenn Shaw's* English version of the Japanese kabuki play "Sakazaki, Lord of Dewa," was given by the Theater Guild of the University of Hawaii on four nights in January. In addition to Shaw's adaptation, the play, as given here, contained a scene written by *Thomas Kurihara,* a student member of the cast, which was one of the most effective of the lighter bits in the play. A real hanamichi or "flower path" was erected down the main aisle, over which the samurai stormed through the audience to rescue the princess from the burning castle. Arthur Wyman, formerly of New York and Hoboken, directed a cast composed entirely of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

The University of Hawaii Theater Guild announces as its next production the world-premiere of *Christopher Morley's* "Where the Blue Begins," with Mr. Morley himself, well known to readers of *The Saturday Review,* appearing in the prologue. He will be here in March for a series of lectures at the university. The guild gives four plays a year, one of Japanese, one of Chinese, one of "haole" or Caucasian, and one of Hawaiian origin.

Robert Lee Eskridge, author of "Manga Reva" and illustrator of Ducorran's "Boy King of the Cannibal Islands," is remaining in Honolulu until August, when he plans to go to the Japanese mandate islands to study prehistoric ruins which he believes to be remnants of the Lost Continent. Mr. Eskridge was the guest of honor recently at a dinner given by Chong Ping-yat, Hawaii's most celebrated Chinese restaurateur.

Excitement was caused in Honolulu by the appearance of the name of *Don Marquis* on the passenger list of the *Monterey,* arriving January 18. The literary editor of the *Star-Bulletin* and two professors from the University of Hawaii went to the boat, with leis. They learned that "Don Marquis" was a Honolulu musician returning from the mainland.

IDAHO

We are indebted to *George Gillmore,* of Boise, for the paragraphs below:—

Byron Defenbach, of Lewiston, is the author of "Red Heroines of the Northwest," a book that has gone through two editions. *Anworth Rutherford,* of Hailey, has to his credit "Squawberry Canyon" and "Hidden Island," both books for boys. *Glenn Balch,* of Boise, is the author of several stories appearing in *The American Boy* and in several of the sportsman's magazines. *Victor Shawe,* of Boise, has written for *The Saturday Evening Post* and *The Pictorial Review,* but is now engaged in mining where he hopes to make a million in a few weeks. "A Romance of Old Fort Hall," by *Minerva Kohlhepp Teichert,* is another book by an Idaho author that has been very favorably received.

MISSOURI

From an article too long for our columns, kindly submitted by *Louis E. Westheimer,* of St. Louis, we glean the following:—

There are some very positive aspects to the Missouri literary scene. Pre-eminent among those aspects is *Mr. Vance Randolph's* book on the Ozarks. It is a genial study of a unified but diminishing people and the half grown mountains of which their ancestors were the settlers and they the rude outgrowth. Ever reluctant to accept the ever increasing facets of modern civilization, your true Ozarkian clings in many customs and, after a fashion, in speech to the Elizabethans from whom he is descended through early emigrated Virginians. These Missourians are not many and their life is willfully circumscribed. That such should be the fate of the children of once valiant frontiersmen is one of the oddities in the development of America.

Miss *Josephine Johnson,* a young woman of whom mention will be made again when the Missouri short story is considered, has occasionally achieved the pages of *Harper's* with her very creditable verse. But this nineteen year old poetess and writer is quite exceptional in producing work at her age which is classifiable far above juvenilia.

NORTH CAROLINA

Dom Placid of Belmont supplies us with an item:—

Mr. Struthers Burt, member of the North Carolina Poetry Society, gave an interesting lecture on the value of poetry in these trying days, in February, at the Chamber of Commerce Auditorium, Charlotte, N. C. The lecture was sponsored by the Poetry Society and was well attended, about three hundred literature lovers being present. Mr. Burt also read from his "When I Grew Up to Middle Age," and rendered some of his magazine verse and also some which is as yet unpublished. "I Knew a Lovely Lady" was received with great applause, as also a poem of Masefieldian genre, "Burial," treating of the "reflections" of a man, Faring, between the time he is pronounced dead and his burial.

The North Carolina Poetry Society is young—barely a year old, but gradually all the representative writers scattered throughout the state are joining its ranks. Three published poems is the requisite for admission to membership. An anthology is in the offing.

OKLAHOMA

We apologize for an error that crept into the news coming from *Elizabeth Williams Cosgrave* which we printed in our February 25th issue. She writes:—

Your item under "Oklahoma" in the Feb. 25th issue struck me like a blow between the eyes. The name of the author of "Wah'Kon Tah" is John Joseph *Matthews.* I cannot believe that I made such an egregious blunder and have already written Mr. Matthews my personal apology. Is it presumptuous to ask you to correct this error? *The Saturday Review* has quite a wide circulation in this section and I hate to have anybody think I am so stupid as to think *Auslander* wrote "Wah'Kon Tah" which is, by the way, the Book of the Month for November 1932. It is Mr. Matthews's first book.

TEXAS

Lois Boyle, of Wichita Falls, contributes:—

Konrad Bercovici, Rumanian Gypsy, world famous author and musician of rank, spoke before the Woman's Forum in Wichita Falls last month on the subject of "Gypsies of Many Lands." Mr. Bercovici's life has given him a colorful and unique background. His talk on Gypsy legends and lore was enthusiastically received by an appreciative audience.

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Rates: 7 cents per word. Address Personal Dept. Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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The PHŒNIX NEST

EARLE F. WALBRIDGE, librarian of the Harvard Club, carries on his interesting tabulations of Romans à Clef (Third Series) in a recent *Publishers' Weekly*. He lately sent us the following note:

> How come you haven't reported the return to earth of the author of "Delina Delany" and "Irene Iddesleigh"? Yes, *Amanda M'Kittrick Ros* contributes Six Poems to the January *London Mercury*. I have always found it hard to believe that the lady ever existed, and I know what a clever parodist *J. C. Squire* is. But this does seem to have the authentic Ros stamp:
>
> *DEATH'S SILENT SYMBOL*
>
> *My death-robe be to me a wrap*
> *Nothing but worms and damp can snap:*
> *Come shield my body with thy glow,*
> *That glistens white as whitest snow.*
> *Act thou to me a virtuous friend*
> *As clergy seem before the end:*
> *Which, when achieved, content we'll rest,*
> *Within our cold and lifeless nest.*
>
> *Nor legal hounds whose briefs of "bluff"*
> *We don't regard, a pinch of "snuff"*
> *Nor judges with their surtouts red*
> *We quite ignore in this our bed.*
> *Nor King nor Queen we worship not*
> *Within our last selected cot.*
> *Nor mankind with huge rolls of ills*
> *Do we regard—our stillness kills.*

Eugene F. Saxton, editor-in-chief of Harper & Brothers, has returned from abroad, having visited Harper authors in England and France. He brought with him the manuscript of the new *H. M. Tomlinson* novel, "The Snows of Helicon," which will be published in May. In England he saw *Francis Brett Young*, *Sheila Kaye-Smith*, *Sir Philip Gibbs*, *Richard Hughes*, *Lorna Rea*, *St. John Ervine*, and *E. M. Delafield*. Miss Delafield, whose "Provincial Lady in London" is being read with enthusiasm in this country, has a new play which has just had its London premiere, and is kept busy with two regular weekly feature articles in London magazines. She hopes to visit America next October. Mr. Ervine has now completed his biography of *General William Booth* which will be published in the early autumn. In France Mr. Saxton visited *Ludwig Lewisohn*, *Julian Green*, *Glenway Westcott*, and *George Davis*, all of whom are at work on new novels. . . .

One of the most successful novels of this season, "God's Little Acre" by *Erskine Caldwell*, is being dramatized by *Patrick Kearney*, the playwright, author of "A Man's Man," the dramatic version of "An American Tragedy," and other successful plays. In the meantime, "God's Little Acre" has just been sent to press for the third time by the Viking Press. . . .

James Truslow Adams has just been elected honorary fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He is the third American in the Society's history to be so honored. The second and final volume of Mr. Adams's history of the American people, "The March of Democracy," will be published on March 17. It brings American history down to the election of *Franklin D. Roosevelt*. . . .

Champion Heather Reveller of Sporran, the famous Scottish terrier owned by *S. S. Van Dine*, has taken top honors at the six dog shows held since the publication of Mr. Van Dine's "The Kennel Murder Case," in which a Scottish terrier, and *Philo Vance's* knowledge of the breed, lead to the solution! . . .

An outpost of the book trade, *S. G. Phillips'* Book Store in Bozeman, Montana, reports the sale of almost seventy copies of *Charles M. Russell's* "Good Medicine" (Doubleday) since December. Montanans are enthusiastic over the beautiful reproductions of Charley Russell's cowboy drawings and the "early days" spirit of the letters edited by his wife with foreword by *Will Rogers*. In addition to steady sales of "The Epic of America," still going strong, and calls for popular novels like "The Magnificent Obsession," there is, says our correspondent, *Polly Robertson*, a continual demand for western material —*Frank Linderman's* stories of the Crow Indians especially "American," biography of Plenty Coups and "Red Mother"; *Lomax's* "Cowboy Songs and Ballads"; Dimmesdale's "Vigilante Days and Ways," and the books of *James Willard Schultz* (Apikunyi of the Blackfeet). Mr. Schultz is stopping in Bozeman at present, as well as *Dorothy Blair*, better known to readers of her latest mystery story, "Murder Among the Angells," as *Roger Scarlett*. No springtime yet, but good reading time in the Rockies! . . .

Milton A. Abernethy of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, editor of *Contempo*, writes us as follows:

"I read with much surprise, in your *Phœnix Nest* of February 25, an announcement of the *New Contempo*, with no additional statement about the original *Contempo* which of course continues to be published and to be sent to you. The enclosed *Contempo* contains, on page 2, a statement of Mr. Buttitta's activities and motives in starting a new paper and calling it by the name of the paper I still publish. I beg you give it some attention."

We have duly read the statement. Mr. Abernethy's *Contempo* remains the original paper and we advise all those interested in it to give attention to its Number 7, Volume III, issue of March 15th. . . .

We are glad to print the following from Lawrence C. Woodman, Chairman of the Independent Writers' Organizational Committee:

> Independent Writers, a new group for poets, playwrights, fictionists, is meeting Wednesdays weekly at 8 p. m., at Prepost Studios, 6 East 14th Street, New York City. Special attention is given to experimental writing, and group criticism is emphasized. Occasional amateur production of members' plays is planned, and it is hoped a poetry and prose annual may be published. All who wish to join such a group are urged to come and bring their manuscripts. Any writers who cannot attend meetings, communicate. THE PHŒNICIAN.

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It is a continual source of surprise to most people to find that truisms are generally true. It is a truism that Pelion on Ossa could not out-top the mass of books on Shakespeare; another, that almost every writer on Shakespeare finds something new; and yet another, that no amount of books about Shakespeare can deaden the freshness of a re-reading of Shakespeare himself.

The best way to read him is in the admirable one-volume *Oxford Shakespeare*.[1] And at last we have the perfect one-volume guide, just published also by the Oxford University Press,[2] *A Short Life of Shakespeare* abridged by Charles Williams (author of *Poetry at Present*,[3] *The English Poetic Mind*,[4] *A Myth of Shakespeare*,[5] etc.) from Sir Edmund Chambers's great two-volume *William Shakespeare*.[6] The present work is a brief account addressed to the general public, but containing only facts and not fancies and including *the Sources*. This is a very important and interesting feature. Shakespeare's signatures are reproduced as are also the two most authentic likenesses, and in two appendixes are quoted all the contemporary allusions and the most important allusions between 1625 and 1825.

(*Robert Greene*, whose allusion we have quoted above, says Sir Paul Harvey in *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*,[7] was "a witty Bohemian, of good intentions but poor performance, who drifted to a miserable end, and is said to have died after an illness brought on by a surfeit of pickled herrings and Rhenish wine." The Oxonian has always thought a nice subject for a doctoral thesis would be "Famous Surfeits".)

If you want a complete treasury of source material, however, you should get *The Shakespere Allusion Book*, a collection of allusions from 1591 to 1700, which has lately been re-issued with a Preface by Sir Edmund Chambers at a remarkably low price.[8] On the same shelf you must have *A Shakespeare Bibliography*,[9] by Walter Ebisch and Lewin L. Schücking; *A History of Shakespearian Criticism*,[10] by Augustus Ralli; *The Oxford Shakespeare Glossary*,[11] by C. T. Onions; and the celebrated *Shakespeare's England*[12] by various contributors. A very recent addition to the Oxford Shakespeare library is *Aspects of Shakespeare*,[13] a collection of the best of the British Academy Lectures, all by celebrated authorities—Lascelles Abercrombie (his *Poetry: Music and Meaning*[14] has just come out), Sir Edmund Chambers, H. Granville-Barker, W. W. Greg, E. Legouis, A. W. Pollard, Miss Caroline Spurgeon, Ashley Thorndike, and J. Dover Wilson.

This volume represents the cream of the new interpretative criticism, whose most brilliant and original exponent is Mr. G. Wilson Knight. T. S. Eliot declared in the introduction to *The Wheel of Fire*,[15] by G. Wilson Knight, "that reading his essays seems to me to have enlarged my understanding of the Shakespeare pattern." And as the *New York Herald Tribune* remarked in hailing "this remarkable book," "a book that has enlarged Mr. Eliot's understanding is a book worthwhile." This was in 1930. Last year was published *The Imperial Theme*,[15] and now has appeared *The Shakespearian Tempest*.[16] His new work is at once the completion of the Study which began with *The Wheel of Fire* and was continued in *The Imperial Theme*, and also a summary and complete presentation of his general view of interpretative criticism. It gives a penetrating and intense view of the Plays from a standpoint that, more than most, is in relation, probably, to Shakespeare's own: for Shakespeare dealt in words and metaphors, and it is the profound significance of those words and metaphors that Professor Knight exposes.

As Mark Van Doren[16] has said, "Mr. Knight . . . adds something at last to the commentary of Coleridge, Hazlitt, and A. C. Bradley."

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